Twin suicide bombings kill 22, hurt 100 in Israel

Story Below, Column 4

Girl killed by stray bullet fired by father

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Tragedy fell harder on a family in Paombong, Bulacan, after police announced yesterday that the stray bullet that ended the life of a 5-year-old girl on New Year's Eve was fired by her own father.

Felipe Bondoc surrendered to police

GIRL/A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Lotto pot to hit P130M

ALL you hopefuls have reason to dream on, with the pot for the Super Lotto 6/49 game intact and growing.

Conrado Zabella of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office yesterday said the jackpot was projected to hit P130 million because no one among

LOTTO/A11

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email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Tuesday, January 7, 2003 ★ 36 pages / 3 sections / vol. 18 / no. 30 P15
website: www.inq7.net

Senate, House split on Charter change

Congressmen pushing constituent assembly now

By Juliet Javellana and Rocky Nazareno

THE IRRESISTIBLE force—as many as 120 congressmen supporting Charter change—has met the immovable object: a Senate majority opposed to constitutional amendments at this time.

"I am confident we will cross party lines and pass this (Concurrent Resolution No. 16) within the month," Western Samar Rep. Eduardo Nachura, chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, said yesterday. The resolution seeks to convene the House of Representatives and the Senate into a constituent assembly to amend the 1987 Constitution.

Nachura said he was confident of the measure's passage because 80 congressmen were co-authors and at least 40 more have signified support.

But if Charter change is to be coursed through a constituent assembly and take effect before the 2004 elections, the administration coalition in the Senate will oppose it.

In a news briefing, Senate President Franklin Drilon said that after consultations with Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier and Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda they had agreed that the Senate majority would "oppose any attempt to amend the Constitution at this time."

"The Senate, as an institution, will not agree to a constituent assembly at this point," Drilon added.

The Senate chief said amending the Constitution at this time was "irresponsible."

"The country is facing more pressing problems and it would be irresponsible for the Senate and the House to focus their attention on amending the Constitution instead of exerting efforts to improve the lives of Filipinos," Drilon said.

Flavier emphasized that Congress had "better things to do."

"This is really not the right time to even change the form of government," Flavier said.

Legarda noted that "any Charter change (at this time) will be politically divisive." She added: "The country is experiencing an

SENATE/A11

Shape up or resign, Cabinet men told

By Cynthia D. Balana and Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo should tell non-performing Cabinet officials to shape up or resign within two months, Sen. Robert Barbers said yesterday.

The administration senator also said Malacañang should adopt a "system of principled leadership," and that Cabinet officials involved or implicated in irregularities should quit in order to give the President a free hand to choose their replacements.

He said Ms Macapagal herself knew who these officials were.

"About one-third of the Cabinet officials are not performing well," Barbers said. "They can be given another chance to make up and a time frame [to do so]. Give them two months, and if they cannot improve, they should be replaced."

In Malacañang, Rigoberto Tiglao smilingly wiped his forehead of imaginary sweat to signify relief as he bade goodbye to reporters.

"I'll be missing you, guys and girls," he said in the course of giving up his function as the President's spokesperson, which would be assumed in concurrent capacity by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

"I've enjoyed answering your questions, trying to explain again and again the things we're doing. It was a very good and exciting experience," he added.

SHAPE UP/A12

22 dead, 100 wounded in twin suicide bombings in Tel Aviv

JERUSALEM—Two Palestinian suicide bombers killed 22 people and wounded more than 100 in Tel Aviv, drawing a helicopter attack in Gaza City and an Israeli decision on Monday to bar Palestinians from attending a London peace parley.

Israeli government sources said Prime Minister Ariel Sharon tempered a military response to the back-to-back blasts in a Tel Aviv foreign workers' neighborhood to avoid upsetting US efforts to win Arab support for possible war on Iraq.

The bombings, condemned as terrorism by the Palestinian Authority, came just three weeks before an election in Israel at which security concerns will be paramount for many voters, and could smooth right-winger Sharon's bid to regain power.

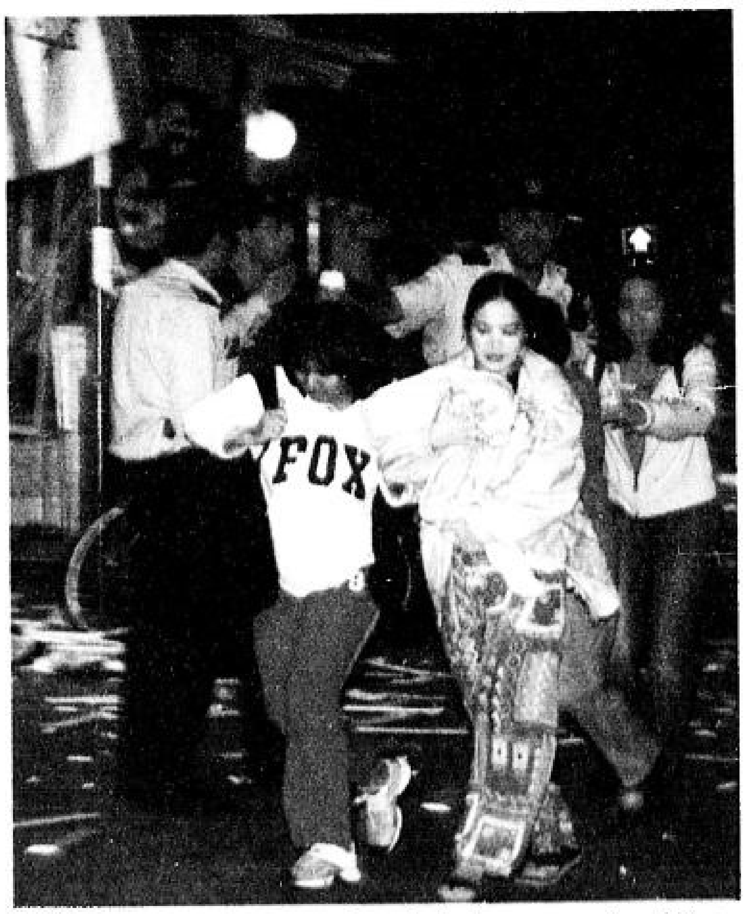
Dr. Yehuda Hiss, director of Israel's national forensic institute, told Reuters that 22 people were killed by the two suicide bombers. Earlier official figures put the number at 23.

Hours after the blasts, at least 14 missiles streaked into targets in Gaza City that included two metal foundries which the army said were used to make weapons for Palestinians in a 27-month-old uprising. Five people were slightly wounded.

Meeting after the first suicide bombing in Israel for six weeks, Sharon's Cabinet in charge of security decided to bar Palestinians from attending two meetings this month, government sources said.

They said Israel would stop top Palestinian officials from travelling to a Jan. 14 conference in London sponsored by Britain to discuss Middle East peace and

22 DEAD/A12


A GROUP of foreign women workers, including one carrying a baby, is directed to safety by Israeli police at the scene of a double suicide bombing attack in downtown Tel Aviv.

AP

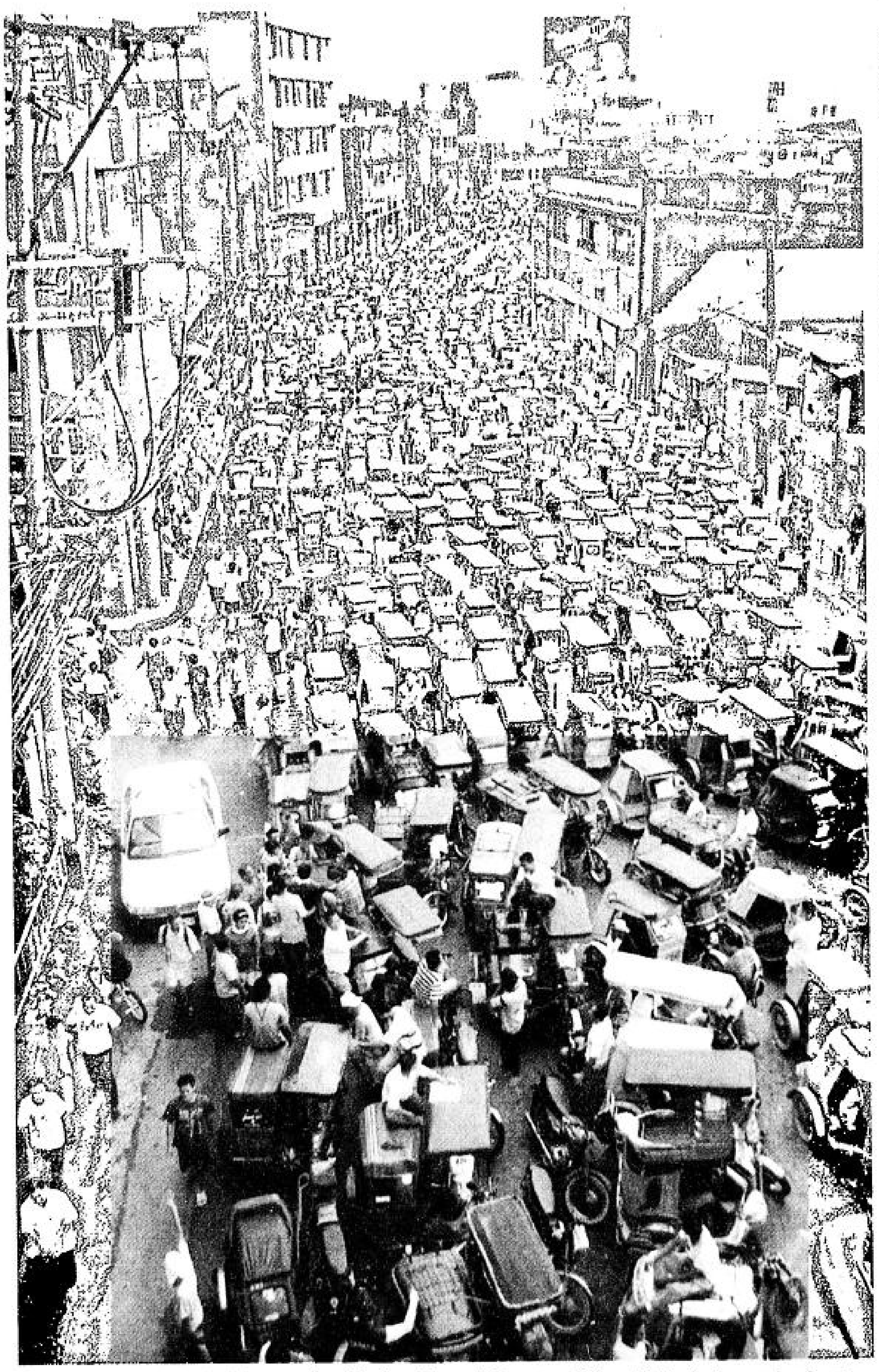
OFWs among those hurt

OVERSEAS Filipino workers, including caregivers, were among those injured in the suicide bomb attack that killed 22 people in Tel Aviv yesterday.

But the figures vary, with labor attaché to Israel Jeffrey Cortazar reporting at least 12 OFWs hurt, two of them critically, and the Philippine Embassy reporting only four, one critically. Foreign Secretary Blas Ople described the latter as a 28-year-old man from Camiling, Tarlac, who suffered severe head injuries.

In her report to Ople, Ambassador Belen Anota said many of those killed or wounded were foreign workers because "the area, which is near Tel Aviv's Central Bus Station, is the favored resi-

OFWs/A12


THOUSANDS of tricycle drivers stall traffic along Legarda Street and Claro M. Recto Avenue leading to Malacañang as they protest the impending phaseout of tricycles under the Clean Air Act.

ERIK ARAZAS

CLEAN AIR ACT

Tricycle drivers win reprieve

By Philip Tubeza and Leila Salaverria

SMOGGY skies over Metro Manila will take a little longer to clear, after tricycle drivers yesterday won a one-month reprieve from the Clean Air Act that came into force at the start of the year.

Hundreds of drivers brought traffic in the National Capital Region to an even slower crawl than usual as they took their vehicles in a procession to Malacañang to protest the new anti-pollution law.

The Clean Air Act calls for emission tests and the phasing out of two-stroke engines.

The reprieve—a suspension for one month of the Metro Manila Development Authority's resolution phasing out two-stroke tricycles—came after the drivers' prayer rally on Mendiola caused a major traffic jam on streets near

TRICYCLE/A12

Gov't housing loan rates reduced

By Dona Pazzibugan

ONLY two days after vowing to "jump-start housing" as part of her eight-point work program, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday stepped on the accelerator.

The President ordered the Land Bank of the Philippines and other government financial institutions offering low- and medium-cost housing loans to cut their interest rate by a third: from 9 to 6 percent per year.

The reduction should benefit low-income families who want to build their own homes or own them, as well as boost the billion-peso housing sector, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters.

In a news briefing, Bunye said

GOV'T/A11

Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/07/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

DOLE orders PLDT strikers back to work

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment has ordered the striking workers of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to return to work starting today.

Rolando Rico Olalia, executive director of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board, said the order was served on both union and management between 6 and 6:30 last night.

Signed by Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas Thursday night, the order reached the NCMB only yesterday after lunch.

Some members of PLDT's rank-and-file union held a rally outside the DOLE office in Intramuros last night.

Sto. Tomas has certified the PLDT dispute for compulsory arbitration before the National Labor Relations Commission, ending the 14-day-old strike. *Blanche Rivera*

Palace won't commit support for war vs Iraq

THE MACAPAGAL administration is non-committal with regard to an informal request of the United States for "general support" in a likely war with Iraq.

"Malacañang's position is that as of now, the possibility of war is still . . . highly hypothetical," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a briefing.

"Things are developing," he said. "This (war) may or may not happen. We will make an announcement at the proper time."

Bunye also said Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas Ople didn't discuss the request during the meeting of the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security yesterday at the Palace.

Asked if a formal request had been made, Bunye said: "I'm not sure it has been received officially by the Department of Foreign Affairs."

On Friday, a DFA source said US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone had made the request in reply to Ople's query as to what was expected of the Philippines, since the sending of troops had been ruled out.

The Philippine government has repeatedly stated that it adheres to the processes adopted by the United Nations regarding Iraq. UN weapons inspectors are currently scouring sites in Iraq suspected to be storing, or to have been used in the manufacture of, weapons of mass destruction.

A recent Pulse Asia survey showed that most Filipinos wanted the country to be neutral in case the war broke.

Opposition Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday cautioned Malacañang against giving the US unconditional support on Iraq.

"We are against terrorism," Biazon said, "but the conditions under which the Philippines must give any support should include concerns over Filipino workers in the Middle East, who would be easy targets (of retaliation)."

Senate President Franklin Drilon insisted that the US should be specific in its request for support, when it decides to make the appeal official. "The Philippines cannot just give a general statement of support for their war," he said.

A ranking US State Department official is due in Manila on Thursday to meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo and the foreign secretary to discuss the impending US military action against Iraq, "among other things."

Ople said Undersecretary of State for Arms Control John Bolton was currently on a series of visits in the southeast Asian region—making stops in Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, and New Zealand—"presumably to rally support for the US."

But the DFA chief clarified that even during the meeting with Bolton, any request for support would not be formal. "These will just be discussions among gentlemen," Ople said.

In any case, the Philippines' Middle East Preparedness Team (MEPT), led by special envoy Roy Cimatu and Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration chief Virgilio Angelo, was scheduled to leave for Kuwait late last night to set up shop for the more than 1.4 million overseas Filipino workers who would need assistance if the US-Iraqi war does erupt.

Ople said that the MEPT had an initial funding of at least P300 million for the evacuation and relocation of the OFWs. "They would put up a forward base in Kuwait just in case huge groups should be evacuated from there and nearby countries."

Cimatu said that the MEPT had prepared "long and well." If no war erupted, he said, "I would still feel more (secure) in adhering to the view that, if the President were to err, it (had) better be on the side of prudence."

An "emergency handbook" containing evacuation plans would be distributed to the workers, Angelo said, and host governments would be asked to help insure their safety.

"I want to assure the workers and their families here (in Manila) that there is no reason to be alarmed because the Middle East situation is still normal, with the workers peacefully doing their jobs," Angelo said yesterday. *Carlito Pablo, Cynthia D. Balana, and Norman Bordadora with a report from Agence France-Presse*

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PNP: Cadet died from head blows

By TJ Burgonio

CADET Geoffrey Andawi, who died Sunday night allegedly from hazing at the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) in Silang, Cavite, suffered head injuries caused by blunt objects, police officials said yesterday.

PNPA officials, led by Senior Supt. Nemesio Radovan, took custody of 3rd Class cadet Jomeri Polquiso, the suspect in the hazing, and turned him over to the police station in Silang for investigation.

Andawi sustained no other injuries in the body apart from "four groups of wounds" in the head, said Chief Insp. Mamerto Bernardo, medico-legal officer of the PNP Crime Laboratory, citing autopsy results.

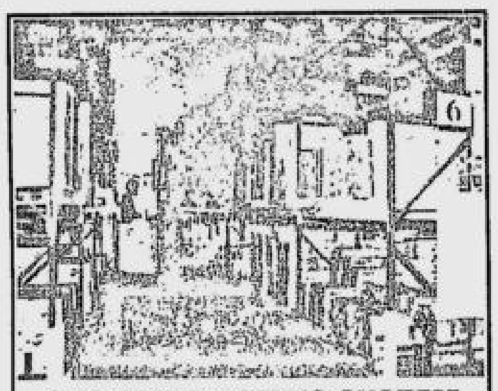
"There's a big possibility that he died from his head injuries which were caused by blunt objects, but I have yet to confirm this," he told reporters.

Bernardo stressed that Andawi's body would be subjected to "histopathology" to determine the extent of his health prior to his death.

Local Government Secretary Joey Lina, however, said that Andawi fell and banged his head in the urinal following the reported hazing, citing initial investigation by school and police authorities.

Andawi, who was found bloodied inside a toilet in the academy, was rushed to the AUP Medical Center in Silang and was declared dead on arrival around 9:30 p.m.

Director Ramsey Ocampo, president of the Philippine Public Safety College, which has jurisdiction over the police academy, said on radio that criminal and administrative charges would be filed against the suspect.



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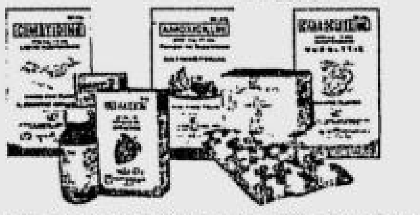

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No more blank check for Palace, says solon

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

"THE ERA when the House wrote blank check for executive agencies is over. We will now exercise oversight on how taxpayer's money are spent," House appropriations committee chair Rolando Andaya said yesterday.

Andaya, representative of Camarines Sur, made the statement in announcing that the House had placed "strict controls on government spending" in the general appropriations bill for this year.

The House has approved the budget bill which provides for P804.2 billion budget for national government this year.

Andaya said a wide range of measures has been included in the bill to "curb frivolous spending and prevent the budget deficit from ballooning."

The House is trying to exercise its "power over the purse."

Among the restrictions are: Banning purchase of new motor vehicles except ambulances, military and police patrol vehicles and construction equipment; disallowing provision of fuel, parts, repair and maintenance to any government vehicle not properly identified as government vehicle and does not carry its official plate numbers except those used by the President, Vice President and other top officials.

"We will only buy vehicles if they will be used to ferry the sick to the hospital or the criminal to jail but not to chauffeur bureaucrats around," Andaya said.

The House also disallows spending on foreign travel of bureaucrats. He said members of the foreign mission in the country where a conference will be held shall represent the country in that conference.

It was not clear if this provision will apply to the congressmen themselves. He said no cash advances would be allowed to officials with unliquidated cash advances.

The House also disallows government agencies from paying honoraria, allowances and other forms of compensation to any government employee except those specifically allowed by law.

He said this would "exterminate the legions of '15-30' (ghost) employees."

He said there will be strict reportorial requirements to all agencies.

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PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo welcomes Italian President of Parliament Ferdinando Cassini, who paid a courtesy call at Malacañang accompanied by Speaker Jose de Venecia.

VAL HANDUMON

Italy vows more investments in RP

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

VISITING Italian President of Parliament Ferdinando Cassini pledged the continued inflow of Italian investments into the country, including a $25-million concessional loan for agricultural projects in Mindanao.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. thanked his guest and asked him if the Italian-funded program could be extended to Luzon and the Visayas.

Cassini and De Venecia also agreed to advance Christian-Muslim dialogue in order to combat international terrorism.

Cassini also gave assurances Rome will continue to promote the greater well-being and welfare of Filipino overseas workers there.

He noted that Italian authorities were "working to regularize the stay of undocumented and illegal migrant workers" in Italy.

Cassini's three-day visit was capped by the presentation to him of the Congressional Medal of Achievement during a dinner hosted in his honor by De Venecia in his residence in Makati.

The medal was in recognition of Cassini's role in advancing freedom and democracy and his government's assistance in fighting organized crime, protection of the environment and stimulating economic growth in the Philippines, according to De Venecia's spokesperson House Deputy Secretary General Noel Albano.

President Macapagal-Arroyo hosted a luncheon for Cassini and his delegation. De Venecia accompanied him to the Rizal Monument where he laid a wreath.

2 bombs found in Pampanga

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Bomb experts from the Philippine Air Force yesterday detonated two improvised bombs in .separate places in Magalang and Mabalacat towns in Pampanga.

Maj. Allan Ballesteros, public information chief of the PAF's 600th Air Base Wing, said the first bomb was left at the FCC Grocery Store in Magalang.

He said the second bomb was attached to the rear of a Wrangler-type jeep parked in a populated neighborhood at the Madapdap resettlement site in Mabalacat.

PAF bomb experts retrieved the bombs and detonated them separately away from populated areas, Ballesteros said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Press raps vs Nani, GMA urged

BULACAN Rep. Willie Villarama urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to allow the investigation of graft charges against her officials despite her decision not to run in 2004.

"The extortion case against (resigned Justice Secretary Hernando) Perez is no yet over," said Villarama, who has returned to the country from Miami, Florida, where he and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay lent moral support to the extradited Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

"With her decision not to run, she should take a lead in investigating this issue," Villarama said.

Villarama said the President's decision should not deter her from investigating the $2 million and other alleged anomalies in her administration.

Villarama had earlier said he was asked by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo to collect money from Jimenez every month between 1998 and 1999. He said he had collected as much as P18 million which he handed over to Mr. Arroyo.

"Part of her good governance is to pay attention to these charges," Villarama said.

He said the investigation on the $2 million should not end with Perez's resignation, otherwise officials who would be charged with offenses only had to quit their posts to avoid prosecution.

Villarama also urged incoming Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong to now allow the Bureau of Immigration to release the travel information of Perez and other people he and Jimenez tagged for the alleged extortion. *Juliet L. Javellana*

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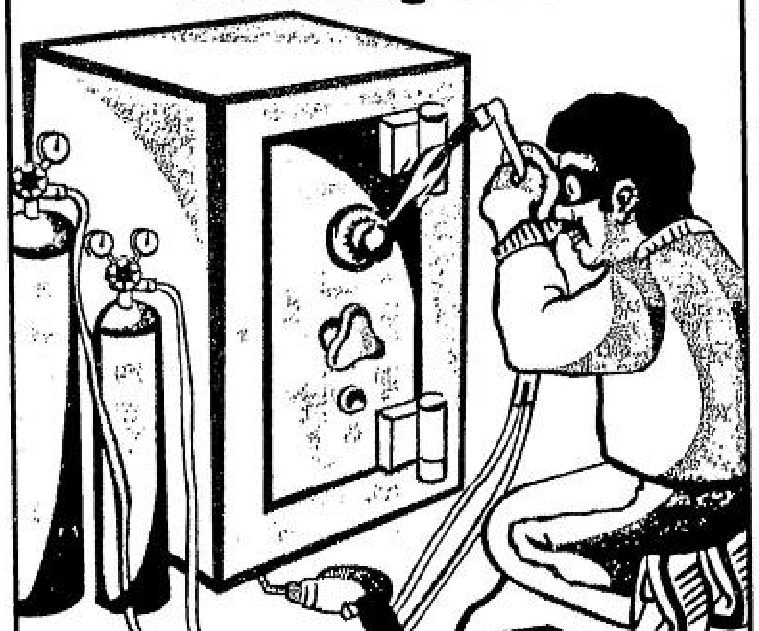

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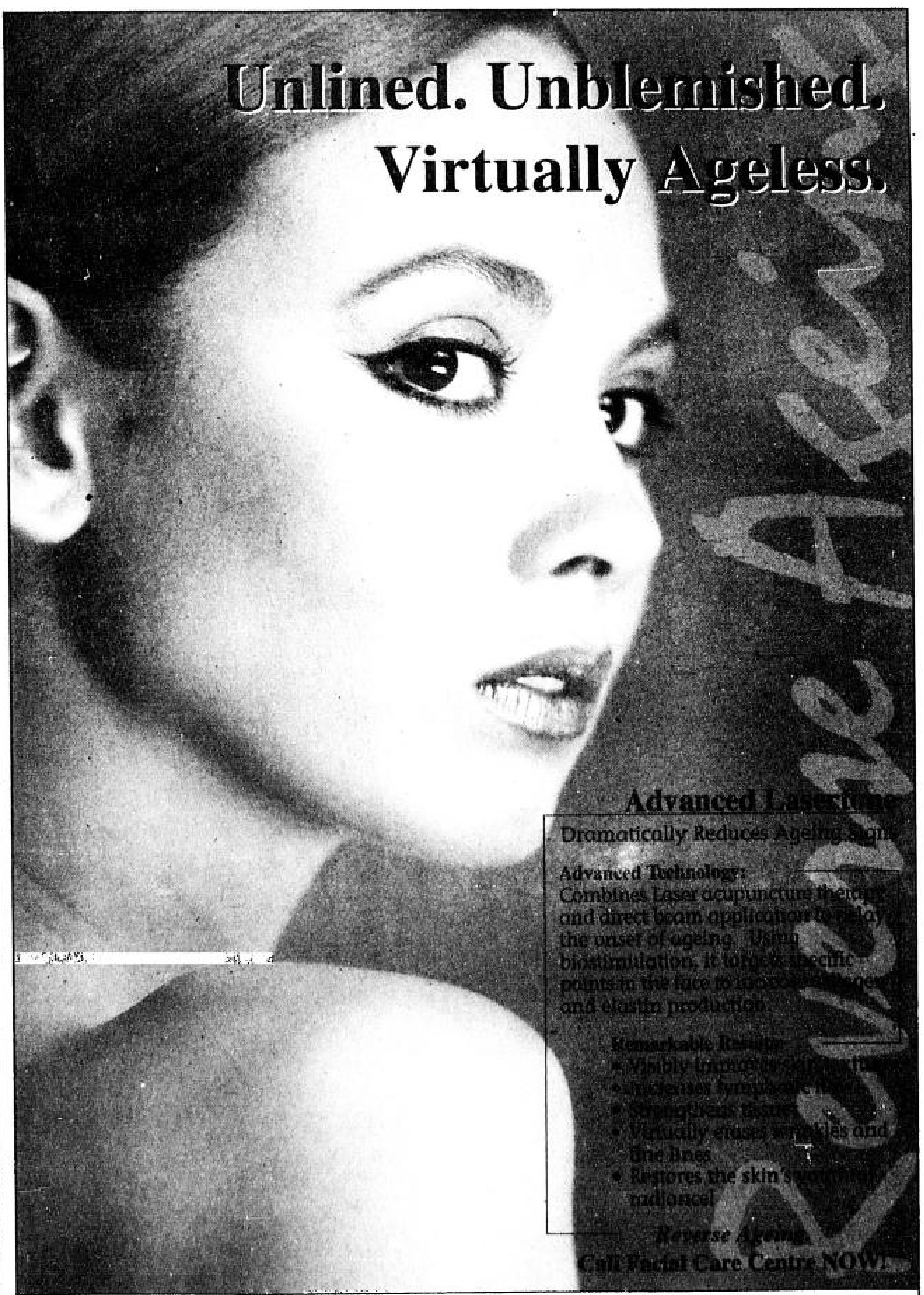

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Military gives up on missing Dutch divers

But pals, relatives extend search for 3 tourists, 2 RP boatmen to Sabah

DUMAGUETE CITY—Even as authorities gave up, friends and relatives have expanded the search for three tourists and their two Filipino boatmen who went missing at sea three weeks ago.

Ineke ten Hertog, a friend of the missing tourists, yesterday said their search would include the seas off Sabah, Malaysia.

Also yesterday, the military called off its own operations, saying the 19-day search had failed to locate the Dutch brothers Marcel Wilderom, 31, and Jan Jacobus Wilderom, 33, or Nicklaus Bischop, 38, from Poland.

Earlier reports that the tourists were recovered and brought to Panay or Guimaras provinces were debunked on Friday by the Siquijor Provincial Capitol.

The three divers were last seen on Dec. 18 sailing to Siquijor island from nearby Apo island with guides Alejandro Maningo and Leoncio Capistrano.

Bad weather

Southern Philippines military chief Lt. General Narciso Abaya told reporters their boat might have capsized in bad weather, and dismissed fears they were kidnapped.

Hertog, along with husband Bart Koeman and two of Bischop's brothers, are in Dumaguete to help in the expanded search. They believe the missing boat could have been carried southwest by the strong sea current.

To help in the calculations, Hertog and his team had used a map and data from the United States' search and recovery operations for the Chinook helicopter, which crashed six miles off Apo Island on Feb. 22 last year, killing all 10 passengers.

The crash site could be in the same area where his friends and their companions were lost, Hertog said.

Last week, he e-mailed to Holland a photograph of the map, plus data on how fast and in which direction the current travelled in the area. Water current experts analyzed the data over the weekend and e-mailed back Hertog's team, suggesting that the search be expanded from southern Negros to the seas off Sulu, Zamboanga del Norte, Palawan and Sabah.

Sabah alerted

Sabah authorities have been "alerted," Hertog said.

Her husband Koeman extended sympathies to the families of the boatmen. "We also feel (their) pain," he said.

Meanwhile, the Dutch Embassy has offered a P50,000 reward for information on the whereabouts of the missing tourists. The embassy's phone number is 02-812-5981; e-mail, man@minbuza.ni. *Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau, with a report from AFP*

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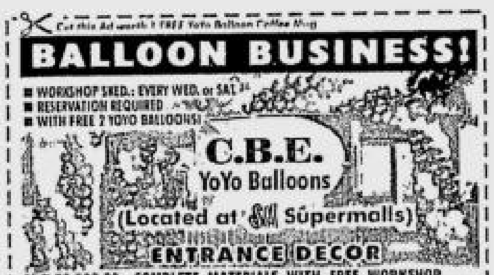

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RP nuns less prone to abuse by priests—CBCP

By Armand N. Nocum

NUNS in the Philippines are less prone to abuse by priests than their counterparts in the United States, according to a ranking official of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines who just happens to be . . . a nun.

Sr. Rosario Fe C. Lorenzo, CM, executive secretary of the CBCP's Mixed Commission on Mutual Relations Between Bishops and Religious, yesterday said Filipino nuns were sufficiently shielded by their "ultra-conservative" nature.

Lorenzo was reacting to a recently released study which showed that about 40 percent of nuns in the US had been abused by priests or other nuns.

In a telephone interview, Lorenzo said culture was a major ingredient in the protective formula. "Asian nuns tend to put more value on the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience," she said.

Marrying as lay people

Filipino nuns and priests who got into romantic relationships usually left their religious orders to marry as lay people, Lorenzo added. "I have yet to hear of anyone in that situation who stayed in the vocation."

But an ex-Claretian priest married to a former nun said what's happening in the US could also be happening here, "although to a lesser degree."

"I once conducted a retreat at a home for unwed mothers," Boni Tago related in a telephone interview. "One of the participants was a pregnant nun. She said the father was a priest, but did not mention his name."

This was in 1985, he added, when he had been a priest for only two years. The nun went back to the convent after giving birth, he said.

Still, Tago agreed with CBCP's Lorenzo in saying that Filipino nuns are highly conservative and strict about their vows. But that's just one side of the equation, he said: "The priests also respect them."

'Easier prey'

What happened more often, he said, was that priests got involved with parishioners, who tended to be easier prey for them because "it is difficult to deceive Filipino nuns."

Tago, married the former Sr. Analiza Velarde of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. They have three kids now. He teaches at the Good Samaritan Colleges in Cabanatuan City, where he is also dean of student affairs and of the college of arts and sciences.

Public not keen on reporting petty crimes—Ebdane

By TJ Burgonio

HOW did the public score in crime reporting last year?

Pathetically, said the country's top cop.

While they were eager to report heinous crimes, the people were slow or altogether unenthusiastic when it came to reporting street crimes, said Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., chief of the Philippine National Police.

By "heinous" crimes, Ebdane referred to kidnappings, car thefts and bank robberies, among others. "Street" crimes covered robbery, hold-ups, pocket-pickings and cellular phone snatchings, and the like.

Speaking at a press briefing following the launch of "Police Community Relations Month" yesterday, Ebdane said the public still had to be be convinced that street crimes were just as big a threat and that "we've got to do something about them."

The PNP chief admitted that he didn't expect Filipinos to be actively involved in the anti-crime campaign, on account of their "psychological makeup."

Asked if he foresaw ordinary people running after criminals, Ebdane said: "The Filipino citizen doesn't want to be involved unless he is provoked."

He recalled witnessing "such apathy" in the aftermath of a vehicular accident on the North Expressway. "None of the other motorists stopped to help," he said. "We were travelling in the opposite direction but the injured had to wait for us to cross. I was heartbroken. And even while we pulled the victims out of the wreck, no one else seemed to mind."

He said this, too, was "pathetic."

However, Ebdane expressed satisfaction over the PNP's performance against crime syndicates and elements.

Crime volume rose by 19.3 percent last year, but he said the police scored big gains against kidnap-for-ransom groups, neutralizing at least seven of the 21 syndicates on the watchlist.

By the end of 2002, Ebdane pointed out, none of the remaining KFR groups was active. "No less than President Macapagal-Arroyo has expressed appreciation of the law enforcement agencies' success," he said.

Earlier, Local Government Secretary Joey Lina disclosed the results of a Pulse Asia Survey on the biggest crimes, according to public perception.

Lina said the survey, which he commissioned two months ago, showed that Filipinos wanted the police to tackle the problem of illegal drugs first and foremost this year.

Next on the list was theft and robbery, then kidnapping, rape and other sexual crimes, prostitution, car thefts, bank robbery, terrorism and internal security problems.

Ebdane said all these "concerns" were in the PNP plan of action.

Fund for slain journalists to be launched today

A JOURNALISTS' Fund, which mainly seeks to aid the solution of unsolved killing of journalists, will be launched today.

The launching will be held after a roundtable discussion on "The Silencing of Filipino Journalists : Impact on the News Media and People's Right to Know" at the AIM Conference Center.

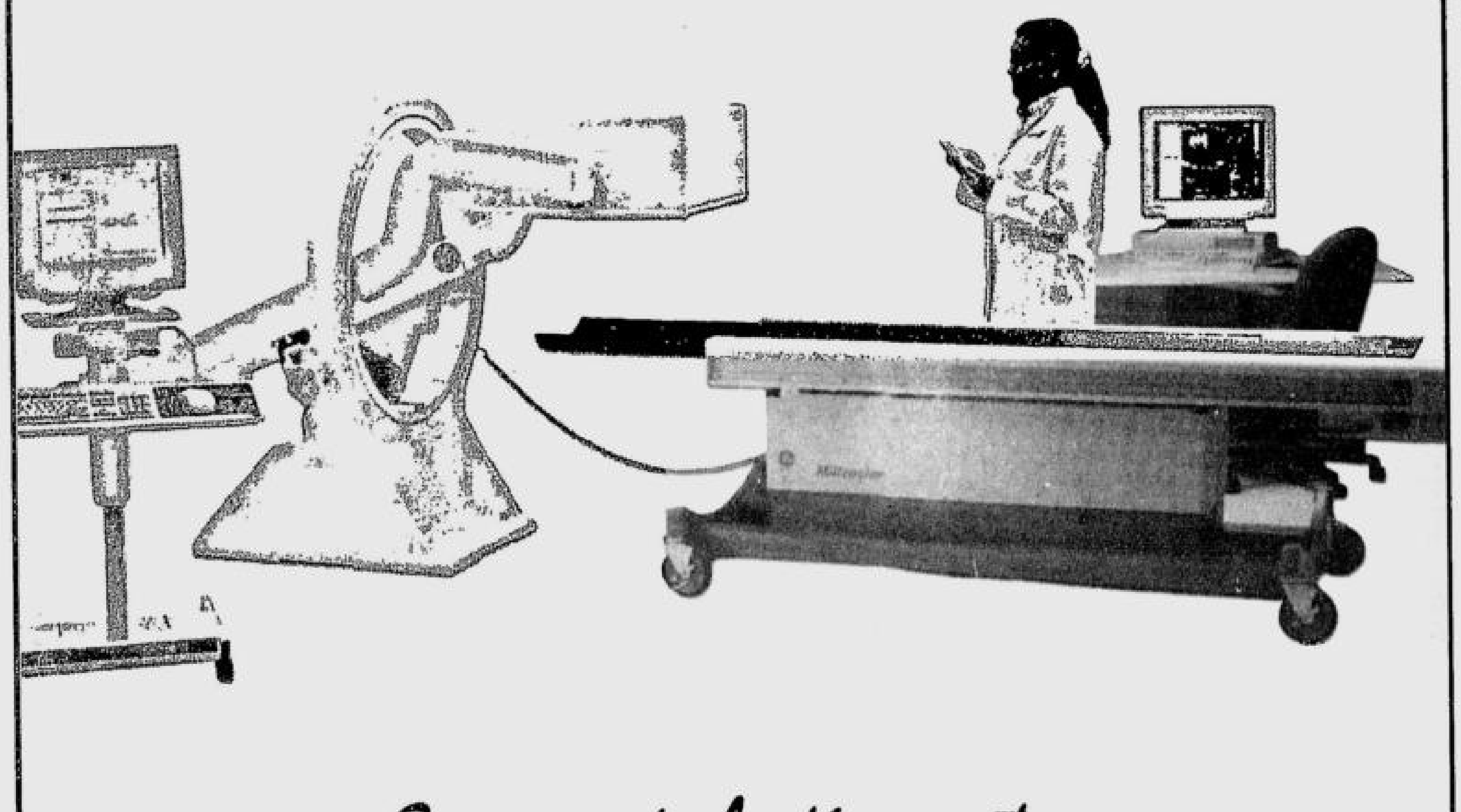
The discussion is the second in a series of media dialogues of the Media, Democracy and Development Initiatives (MEDDIA) which is undertaken jointly by the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD), Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) and the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism.

MEDDIA aims to enhance and strengthen media capacity to ensure transparency and accountability of governance and to popularize gender and human rights.

The three agencies cooperate under the program in partnership with the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme, and the National Economic Development Authority.

Red Batario, CCJD executive director and Melinda Quintos de Jesus, CMFR executive director, set the meeting objectives and the overview on the killing of journalists, respectively.

Updates of cases involving murdered journalists, Edgar Damalerio and Nesito Toting will be presented by Gemma Damalerio and Virgie Toting respectively. Linn Neumann of the Committee to Protect Journalists provides an international perspective of the issue while Sheila Coronel, PCIJ executive director, will wrap up the discussion and present plans.



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'Ghost' foundation got jueteng money, court told

By Volt Contreras

STATE prosecutors yesterday further portrayed the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation (EMYF), allegedly Joseph Estrada's conduit for laundered jueteng money, as a philantrophic venture that existed only on paper.

At the resumption of the historic trial yesterday following the holiday break, a private lawyer testified that the EMYF neither had an office nor a staff of its own although it was duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission in February 2000.

Oswaldo Santos said he discovered this while investigating the EMYF during Estrada's Senate impeachment trial, when the House prosecution panel sought his law firm's help in gathering evidence against the then President.

After securing copies of EMYF's incorporation papers from the SEC, Oswaldo said, he personally went on Jan. 5, 2001 to the foundation's listed address on the 15th floor of the Strata 100 Building on Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center in Pasig City.

No such foundation

But the lobby guard, the building's administration office and a certain Ma. Victoria Arevalo whom he met on the 15th floor, all said no such foundation held office in Strata 100.

Santos said he was instead told that the whole 15th floor was occupied by the law firm De Borja Medialdea Bello Guevarra & Herodias.

Santos also recalled that this was also the information he got from the telephone operator when he dialled the contact numbers the foundation gave the SEC.

Off-court, Assistant Ombudsman Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the law firm Santos had referred to in his testimony used to include Estrada's co-accused, Edward Serapio, as one of its partners.

Serapio served as the EMYF's corporate secretary, according to the SEC documents presented by the prosecution. The Board of Trustees included Estrada's brother-in-law Raul De Guzman, also a member of the University of the Philippines' Board of Regents; UP professors Mila Reforma and Danilo Reyes; and banker George Go, who resigned as chair of Equitable-PCIBank (EPCIB) at the time it was being dragged into the Estrada impeachment trial.

'Jueteng' money

The Foundation was allegedly a recipient of a P200-million cut from Estrada's alleged payola collections from illegal jueteng operators.

The transfer of funds to the EMYF was said to have been arranged by Serapio with an EPCIB officer, Beatriz Bagsit.

Villa-Ignacio said prosecution is about to rest its case with six to nine more witnesses to be presented after Santos.

The Estrada trial is now entering its 21st month.

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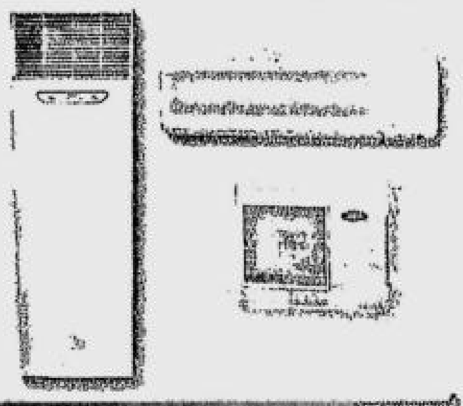

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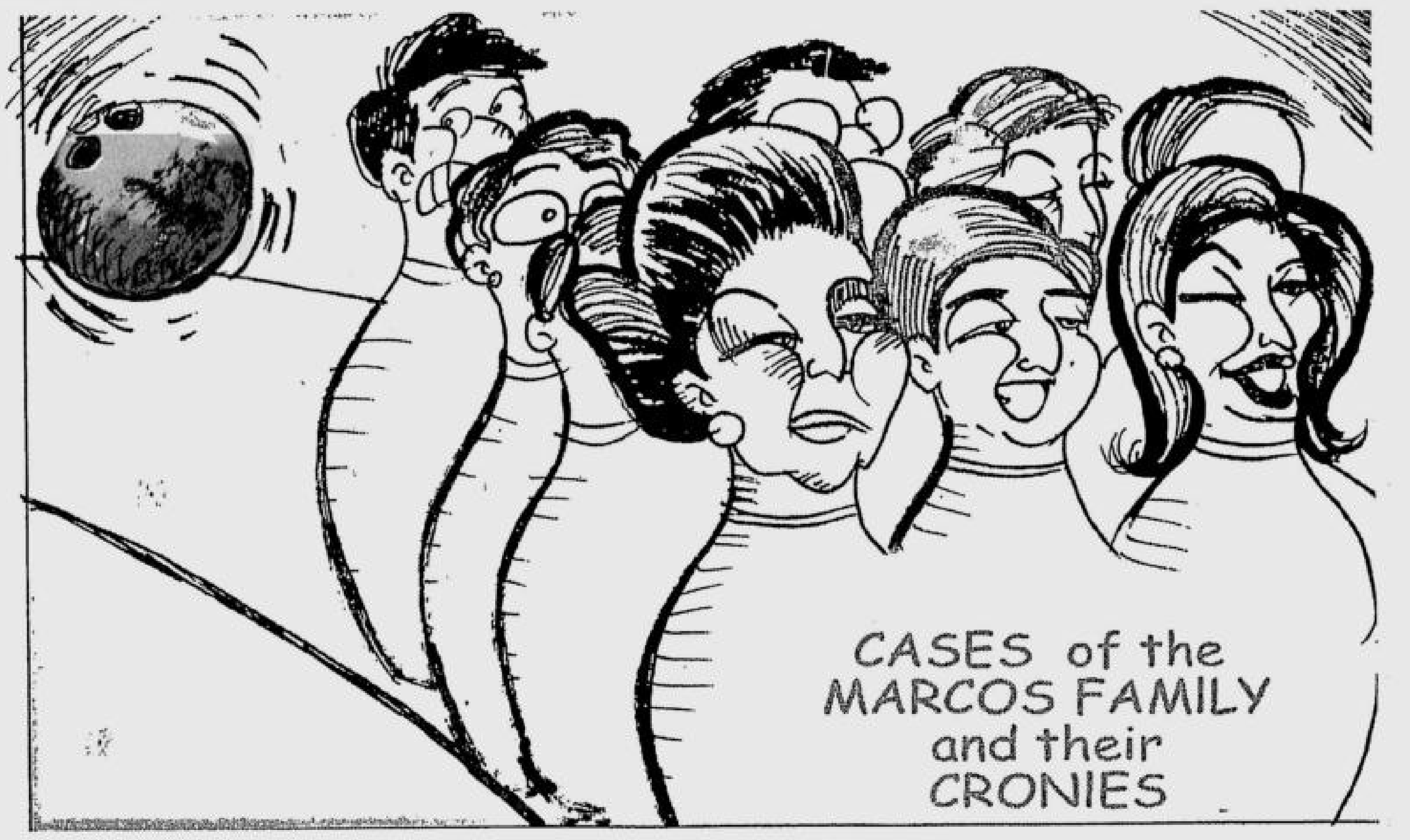
CASES of the MARCOS FAMILY and their CRONIES

Reminders of martial law

EDITORIAL

TWO recent events served to remind the nation of the late unlamented Marcos dictatorship: The blasting of the Marcos bust on Marcos Highway in Benguet and the showing of the film "Dekada '70" during the Metro Manila Film Festival.

Of the two events, the blasting of the hated Marcos bust was the more symbolic. It was a belated expression of disgust and protest against the abuses and repression of the Marcos dictatorship. "Dekada '70" dealt mainly with the demonstrations, arrests, tortures and disappearances that occurred during the martial law years.

The two events should serve to inform the younger generation, especially the teenagers and the twenty-somethings who were not even born yet when martial law was imposed in 1972, that the nation suffered the darkest period in its political history about 30 years ago. Without events like these to remind the younger generation, many of them might grow up thinking that the 1970s were glorious, halcyon years of a beneficent Marcos rule. We're afraid that in fact many of them believe this, otherwise how do we account for the good showing of most of the Marcoses at the polls?

The blasting of the Marcos bust should be a wake-up call to the nation. Time is running out and we may be forgetting that we have to call to account the Marcoses, their cronies and other people who were responsible for the abuses and plunder committed during the martial law years.

To date, the victims' major victory—if it can be called a victory (since no actual award has been made)—is the decision of a US court to award $2 billion in damages to nearly 10,000 human rights victims of the Marcos regime. The enforcement is now up to the Philippine government. When will it ever write finis to the case?

Hundreds of cases against the Marcoses and their cronies are still pending in the courts 17 years after Edsa I toppled the dictatorship and forced the "kleptocrat" (according to the Guinness Book of World Records) president to flee to Hawaii. Three administrations—the Aquino, Ramos and Estrada—had the opportunity to resolve these cases but instead dragged their feet on them.

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo has no plan of running in 2004 and should therefore have no fear of alienating powerful politicians, among them the Marcoses and their allies, one real legacy she can leave the nation is the final resolution of the Marcos cases. She can prod the Presidential Commission on Good Government, the Department of Justice and the Sandiganbayan to act faster on these cases.

Thousands of cases of murder, torture, mutilation, serious physical injuries and rape were committed against militants and activists who dared oppose the martial law regime. What is going to happen to all these cases? Will they end up being consigned to the archives? Will there ever be hope of justice being served to those who died or suffered for the cause of freedom in the dark days of the dictatorship?

Again, the President can take a direct hand in these cases, and since she is not running for reelection, she cannot be accused of having political motives if her administration goes after officials and politicians of any party who are involved in these cases. She has, after all, a mandate as president to do justice to every man.

It is said that we should forgive and forget what happened during the martial law years to promote unity and reconciliation. Forgive and forget the abuses, the killings, the tortures, the rapes, the mutilations, the plunder of the national treasury, the wholesale graft and corruption? But forgiveness should come only after confession. And up to now nobody has confessed to any wrongdoing. Forgiving and forgetting should not mean that we should forget about dispensing justice.

It is said that we are a forgiving people. We easily forgive the harm that is done to us. But that should not be the case because it promotes a culture of impunity. It is an attitude that makes it possible for people who commit or order the commission of hundreds of murders or who steal billions of pesos to get away free. A culture of impunity makes it possible for some officials to continue committing murder, to continue committing graft and to continue raiding the treasury.

The blasting of the Marcos bust, more than just a symbolic act, should shake us from the torpor, the state of forgetfulness about the bad things that happened during the Marcos regime. We can have unity, we can begin with a clean slate if we forgive and forget, but before there can be forgiveness, there must be confession and there must be justice.

GMA has a rare chance to end squatting

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

WITH her decision not to run in the 2004 presidential polls, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has that rare opportunity to impose really meaningful reforms. Officials running for election don't dare push reforms that would cost them votes.

One example is the policy coddling squatters at the expense of property owners. Everybody knows that that stupid Lina Law, the Urban and Housing Development Act, should be repealed or amended. Although it was touted by its sponsors as the "ultimate solution" to the squatting problem, it has made squatting many times worse. But no legislator dares to introduce amendments because squatters are voters. No mayor or governor enforces the more sensible provisions of the law—such as the provisions against squatting syndicates and against local officials who tolerate squatting—because squatters are voters. The officials will need their votes come election time. Property owners are voters, too, and taxpayers besides, which the squatters are not, but it so happens that there are more squatters and so they are coddled for their votes. Presidential candidates, who should know better, court those votes, too and so when they are elected, they pretend that they are being pro-poor when they coddle squatters.

But the driving force behind the profitable squatting industry is not the poor squatters themselves but the squatting syndicates, the professional squatters who take advantage of and profit from the real squatters. These professional squatters are rich manipulators who build shanties and rent them out to genuine squatters, steal water and electricity and sell them at onerous rates to the same squatters. They are land speculators who get government relocation lots and sell the rights to others and then go back to squatting to be given cheap government lots again. They invade private lots and open spaces in private subdivisions and sell them to gullible genuine squatters.

Every squatter colony has such professional squatters and squatting syndicates, but although the law clearly mandates their arrest and prosecution (and there are legions of them), have you heard of any professional squatter or syndicate member who has been prosecuted and jailed?

The same law mandates the prosecution of local officials who tolerate squatting, but have you heard of any official who has been prosecuted and dismissed because of that? On the contrary, the barangay officials, who should be the first line of defense against squatting and whose pay comes from taxpayers and property owners, take advantage of and profit from the squatters by collecting monthly *tong* and rentals from them.

Because of this coddling, scarce government revenues are wasted on criminals, the professional squatters. Public works budgets for projects have doubled because squatters are paid to get out of the right of way although the law does not mandate that. When a road is being built, hordes of squatters invade the right of way because they know they would be paid for their crime, although the DPWH and local governments are supposed to stop them. The construction of C-5 has ground to a halt at the back of the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City, because the government has run out of money to pay the squatters on Luzon Avenue and beyond. Squatters are flocking to the right of way of Congressional Avenue, also in Quezon City, which is under construction. The DPWH and the Quezon City government are supposed to prevent them, but they're doing no such thing. Their officials are supposed to be prosecuted for tolerating squatting but no such thing is being done.

With a policy such as this, the entire government will run out of funds and land for relocation sites and the squatting problem will never be solved. On the contrary, the problem will get worse because this policy encourages squatting by making it profitable.

As mentioned earlier, no president will change that policy because he or she needs the squatters' votes. But with President Macapagal not running for election and therefore not needing votes, she can end this vicious cycle. She can institute meaningful reforms, no matter whom she displeases, because she does not need votes. That is the reason, by the way, behind the no-reelection provision of the Constitution: so that the president will not be influenced by vote-getting in her decisions.

For starters, the President can order the strict enforcement of the Lina Law's provisions against squatting syndicates and officials coddling squatters. Then she can certify to Congress proposed amendments to the more onerous provisions of the law, such as the mandatory relocation of all squatters. Let's face it, the government does not have enough funds and land to relocate all squatters. It should not make the crime of squatting pay. Anyway those who are benefited are not really the poor but the professional squatters, the syndicates and the speculators.

And then she can certify legislation to clarify the definition of "domicile" in the Election Code. "Domicile" means the permanent address of the voter. But this is now interpreted as the temporary address of the squatter. By definition, a squatter's present residence is temporary. Therefore, that is not his permanent address and he should not be permitted to vote there. This wrong interpretation is what makes politicians not only coddle squatters but actually bring them in so they can vote for him. The squatters will not be disenfranchised. They should be allowed to vote but in their permanent addresses as the law requires.

No president will dare certify such a clarification. But a non-political, non-candidate president can.

Again, unity

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

I'M glad Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo wants a "government of unity" that is based on programs rather than personalities. The latter is what Speaker Jose de Venecia wants. He is proposing a coalition composed of opposition figures and representatives from various dissident groups, like the NDF and MILF.

There are two basic principles of unity. The first of them is that unity is not a question of who are going to unite but what they are going to unite on. As I said in a column last Dec. 12, there has never been a problem of unity in this country. Each time the people need to unite, they've never had problems doing so. Disaster, for example, has been known to bring out the best in us. An earthquake hits Baguio, and everyone pitches in to help those trapped under the rubble. A volcanic explosion hits Pampanga and Tarlac, and everyone pitches in to pluck out those caught in harm's way. A tyrant makes life unbearable for the nation, and everyone pitches in to overthrow him.

The very existence of the Macapagal administration is proof of it. It is the product of unity, of the Filipinos coming together to oust a tyrant. And a most miraculous unity, too, given that the tyrant happened to have been the most popular president ever voted to power in this country, though one who also overstayed his welcome but a couple of years in Malacañang. That GMA succeeded Erap may not have been a unanimous choice but it was at least a majority one. Most people were unwilling to rock the boat and go extra-constitutional the rest of the way.

The point is simple, and one that the movie "Field of Dreams" puts so well: "If you build it, they will come." Or to amplify what has already been put so well succinctly, the equation is not, "If you issue a call, people will flock to you." It is, "If you have a dream, people will come to you." The magnetism does not lie in personal charisma, it lies in universal aspiration.

That brings us to the second basic principle of unity. A "government of unity" does not mean the administration uniting or sharing power with the opposition and other groups. It means the leaders uniting with the people and allowing them to govern themselves. The problem is not that the administration has alienated itself from Erap's minions, it is that it has estranged itself from the people. That is the reason for GMA's fall in the eyes of the public. It is not just a question of popularity (GMA was never popular to begin with, unlike Cory or Erap), it is a question of respect. The people lost respect for their government, a government they had exerted themselves epically to birth. That was the unkindest cut of all.

A "government of unity" that merely unites the different ruling factions forgets one fundamental principle of democracy, which is that the people are part of government. No, more than that, the people are the government. It's not the other way around. Certainly not in this country: There is no reason to believe that the government is the people. Not if you go by the scale of pillage and policies that controvert the interests or express wishes of the people.

A coming together of ruling factions without the people is not unity, it is conspiracy. Or worse, it is division of spoils. It is an effort to appease critics, occupational or natural, by giving them "part of the action."

GMA wants to have a "government of unity," she does not need to go far to find the dream of vision she can rally the people around her for. She needs only heed Rizal's aphorism that people who do not know where they came from will never know where they are going—which has proved exceptionally true in her case—and recall how she came to power. She needs only hark back to where she started and recollect the aspirations of Edsa II. She needs only wake up from her slumber and start laying the cornerstones of the world "people power" envisioned.

That vision, or aspiration, or world, is not a "strong republic," which refutes everything Edsa II stood for. Certainly, it is not the uncritical adoption of a "war against terror," which thwarts everything Edsa II stood for. Edsa II stood for ending the rule of cronies and thugs, the latter often wearing cops' uniforms, who arrogated the law unto themselves. It stood for enlarging the scope of freedom, for ushering in the sway of human rights, for making government more transparent and responsive to the people's will. A strong republic stands only to strengthen the rule of cronies and thugs, the latter often wearing cops' uniforms, who arrogate the law unto themselves. Its iron handmaiden, a "war against terror," only murders freedom, ushering in the sway of national security and making government more impenetrable and conducive to corruption.

What this country needs is not a strong republic, it is a strong citizenry. This country has never lacked for a strong republic, any more than it has lacked for unity. The one being the cause and the other the effect: It's a strong republic that has caused the people to unite to overthrow it. You can't have any stronger republic than the one Marcos imposed, one anchored on stifling dissent on the ground of national security, the same ground GMA's "war against terror" stands on. What this country has always lacked is a strong citizenry, which is the stuff democracy is made of. The guarantee of democracy, as America so well shows, is not a government armed with nuclear missiles, it is a society blessed with free speech. The security of a country does not lie in a government having the arms to fight for it, it lies in a people having the will to defend it.

The opposite is just as true: If you wreck it, they won't come. Or if they do, it will only be to use hammer and pickaxe on you.

Cojuangco wants to be PM

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE MEDIA, including this column, have reported that the Nationalist People's Coalition is eyeing industrialist Eduardo Cojuangco as its presidential candidate. I raised doubts, however, whether he would really throw his hat into the presidential derby for several reasons. Sources close to Cojuangco say he's not interested in running for president, but for prime minister in a parliamentary system. This is more likely, since it's easier for him to do so, given the fact that he has funded the campaign of many congressmen. I understand that some key leaders don't want to support Charter change because of Cojuangco's possible emergence as PM. But I asked some friends how they feel about this possibility and their reply is that they'd rather gamble with Cojuangco in a parliamentary system than Fernando Poe, Panfilo Lacson or Noli de Castro in a presidential system.

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Former Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong misses the point. If people are dismayed by his appointment as justice secretary, it is not because he is a Muslim. It is the fact that Datumanong barely practiced law and was more in business and in Congress. As the executive department's chief interpreter of the law the justice secretary has to be steeped in it, which Datumanong is not.

Outgoing Secretary Hernando Perez, a former law dean and longtime law practitioner, knew his law pretty well and chalked up a number of outstanding cases at the DOJ, apart from his brilliant participation in former President Estrada's impeachment trial. These included the detention of Estrada and of MNLF chief Nur Misuari. What a tragedy that Perez got mired in a scandal from which he couldn't extricate himself. In the end he chose the honorable course of resigning from the Cabinet, so that he would not be albatross around the President's neck.

* * *

As for MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, Estrada wanted to appoint him to the DPWH top post even when he was still mayor of Marikina, but it didn't push through. The consensus seems to be that BF ought to be left in the MMDA where he is doing a good job enforcing the law in the metropolis. BF shouldn't be recruited to the DPWH, or worse, given two concurrent jobs as he'll end up doing a bad job of both. Besides, BF's confirmation at the Commission on Appointments for the DPWH post is bound to be agonizing and controversial since his critics have a number of issues against him, like alleged nepotism during his term as mayor, and certain unexplained fund transfers at the MMDA. Should he go to DPWH, there could also be conflict of interest with his private construction company, which critics say cornered all construction contracts in Marikina during his time (up to the present?).

Public Works Undersecretary Teodoro Encarnacion might be more effective at the DPWH's helm than Fernando. The career official has been endorsed by various leaders. Why doesn't the President appoint him?

* * *

After I wrote about how the US medical insurance firm Blue Cross ignored the demands of my sister-in-law, Neomi Tanedo Olivares, for payment of her hospital bills, I got many responses from citizens with similar complaints as well as doctors who see the people being victimized by these companies. One of them was my good friend, ex-Negros Oriental Rep. Miguel Romero, who said that during his first term in the early 1990s, he secured a medical insurance coverage from Blue Shield/Blue Cross. During his second term in 1993, Romero suffered kidney failure and needed dialysis and eventually a kidney transplant, which proved very successful. He tried to secure his claim with the insurance firm and found out to his dismay that he did not quality because he had an alleged "pre-existing" health problem. While pressing for payment, Romero found out from his lawyer-friend Antonio Amador that Blue Shield/Blue Cross had no office in Hong Kong but it has one in the Pacific islands.

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Not long afterwards, Romero underwent a kidney transplant in Houston, Texas, spending all his savings for it and a three-month rehabilitation stay in the US. Upon his return, lawyers in his law office immediately filed an estafa case with hold-departure order against the firm's foreign representatives. Fortunately, Romero was able to recover almost one-third of his US medical expenses, but that's because he threw his entire weight and influence as a congressman against this firm. But what about simple folks without connections? Will they just have to suffer the trickery and the deception of these firms?

His case happened nearly a decade ago, but Romero was shocked to read in column that the foreign medical insurance firms are still operating here even without local representatives. To protect the interest of the suffering public, he recommends that the Insurance Commission check the activities of these foreign companies, and that the health committees of both the Senate and the House investigate this matter soonest. How about it, Sen. Juan Flavier? I think you will be shocked by what you will find.

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Retrouvaille, a Catholic ministry whose apostolate is to save hurting and troubled marriages from completely breaking up, is offering a stay-in weekend encounter for married couples with problems. The first this year will be this Friday, Jan. 10, up to Sunday, Jan. 12, at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Bgy. San Jose, Tagaytay City. Retrouvaille has a proven track record of helping troubled marriages. For more information call Fr. Dave Clay at 523-3361 or cell 0918-9020511; Tom and Ruby del Castillo, 931-8413, 932-3750 or cell 0918-923-2973; or Ike and Flor Carlos at 718-0689. All calls will be treated as confidential.

Not really a surprise

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THAT news report that in the US as many as 40 percent of Catholic nuns have been sexually abused, "often by a priest or another nun," may have come as a shock to many readers.

The story was based on the findings of a national survey conducted by researchers at St. Louis University and completed in 1996. The survey results, though, were "kept under wraps" says the report, allegedly because "some Catholic officials feared that the information would create a scandal."

I found the story's contents startling myself, but I wasn't all that shocked. I'd already heard about similar findings about Catholic nuns, but not in the US, but here in the Philippines.

A friend who frequently conducts gender-sensitivity orientations for groups of nuns, told me that many congregations these days are facing a "crisis." It seems that many sisters are reaching middle age and only now are they recovering long-suppressed memories of sexual abuse that took place in childhood or adolescence. I won't be all that surprised, too, if many Filipino nuns are only now finding the courage to speak out about their abuse in the hands of priests or other nuns.

There is only anecdotal evidence, but it appears that for many women religious, their vocation was as much an escape and search for refuge as it was a genuine calling. It does seem logical that a life of celibacy and perhaps even retreat from the world would hold tremendous appeal for someone seeking to repress and bury in the mist of forgetfulness painful memories of sexual abuse. It would also seem evident that the nunnery would at least assure the young woman that she would be far removed and protected from her abuser.

* * *

FROM what we know now, it would seem that young women religious would be particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse.

Even if a young woman were not driven to the religious life because of a past history of sexual abuse, she would, compared to her contemporaries, be less knowledgeable about matters of sex, more innocent of life and its darker aspects. This especially if she entered the convent when congregations were still accepting postulants fresh from high school, where a religious bent would assure that they would be renouncing the material world not knowing what it was they were turning their backs on.

Before the Second Vatican Council ushered in fresh winds of change (almost literally for many women religious who were finally liberated from habits that were not too far removed from burqas), congregations of women were also run according to unbending rules that called for absolute obedience. Indeed, community life required a young woman to renounce her independence and "selfishness," to negate herself in service to her sisters, the community, the Church and to God.

In such a setting, how could a sister abused by a superior, be it a priest or a nun, be expected to speak out and denounce the crime done her? Would not her tendency be to keep quiet and "offer up" her suffering as a sacrifice and form of mortification?

* * *

JOHN Chibnall, a research psychologist who co-authored the St. Louis University study, could not help but step out of his scientific persona to comment: "These women have been the stalwarts of the Church for centuries, and a significant percentage of them have been victimized as a result of the structure of the very institution to which they have dedicated their lives."

The report said the survey also showed that repressing experiences of sexual abuse often results in mental and emotional strain—and dare we say, spiritual crises—for the survivors. Those who admitted having been abused reported that "they were left with feelings of anger, shame, anxiety and depression, and some said they had attempted suicide."

This may well be what the leaders of local congregations were referring to when they said a similar problem here was reaching "crisis" proportions. How could these "stalwarts of the Church," after all, continue ministering to the faithful when they themselves were in pain?

* * *

NO one, of course, takes pleasure in the disclosure of such disturbing news. Such as no one, save perhaps for the victims, could have been "happy" about the revelations of priestly sexual abuse and the complicity of the hierarchy in covering up the crimes.

But even if the news had remained buried, it doesn't mean that sexual abuse did not and does not happen within the Church. And it seems obvious that suppressing the accounts of abuse not only did not help the victims, it also inflicted more harm, ensuring that the trauma would last far beyond the incident itself, to become a lifelong malady.

If even nuns could come out in the open with their stories of childhood sexual abuse, or victimization at the hands of priests and other religious, perhaps they could help society at large finally come to terms with the evil of sexual abuse and exploitation.

The same friend who told me about the impending crisis in many congregations was also involved in a project with several Catholic schools to address the issue of incest and child abuse among their students. This after students in several schools were discovered to have been victimized for years, resulting, in at least one case, in the suicide of the young victim. The project, however, had to be cut short after parents, especially fathers, complained that the awareness-raising sessions had supposedly sown "distrust" between them and their children.

Until we are ready to talk about this openly and confront it directly, sexual abuse will continue to victimize innocents—even those who sought escape in a convent.

Something deserving of reverence

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

IF you are interested in architecture or in conservation issues, ask yourself what percentage of the structures in our urban areas has been surveyed for cultural or historic significance? In the plantilla of the MMDA or the local government, how many attend to the city's architectural history? The answer should tell us the importance the concept of historic architecture plays in any local official's plans.

Aside from local officials who could do much to preserve their city's links with its origins, there are also national officials one expects to protect the people's heritage. Alas, from the track record, there isn't much help coming from that direction either.

Take the case of the Manila Hotel. Despite the Supreme Court ruling that it is part of our patrimony, it has not been designated as a landmark simply because no one requested it—or so I was informed by the National Historical Institute before Director Ambeth Ocampo's tenure. The kindest comment you can make is that their logic appears to be faulty or they didn't understand the ruling. Whatever the reason, it resulted in their incapacity to interfere with any changes that the GSIS partner, Emilio Yap, felt like inflicting on the venerable structure.

Anyone who remembers the grand five-star hotel after its renovation in the 1970s can only cringe at the destruction of the once elegant lobby that could compare with other historic hotel lobbies in the world. This was before Yap installed a fake Amorsolo beside a real one, replaced Ming martabans with gold painted jars, and, saints preserve us, hung a plastic neon lighted giant photograph of the hotel at the entrance, supposedly so that guests could have their photos taken beside it. Not content with destroying the lobby, Yap went on to decimate one of the country's loveliest ballroom with the addition of a jerrybuilt Centennial Hall with walls of plyboard, varnished at that.

In the meantime, there was not a word from our esteemed officials who should have been protecting, if not our patrimony, then at least our investment which has now been devalued, what with cheesy, cheap, gold-painted Chinese dragons fronting a Chinese restaurant with a glaring bright red arch.

It is, of course possible, that Yap's decorator doesn't understand antiques or fine porcelain or even what is expected of a hotel bearing a historic name. That, or he just has no taste to speak of. (Unfortunately I have been informed that taste cannot be legislated.)

What the decorator has done to the Champagne Room is another crime that deserves a volley in Bagong Bayan at dawn. Its once charming elegance has been supplanted by what can only be described as *panciteria* goulash.

Now it appears that Yap intends to remove the garden and the swimming pool in order to put up another tawdry structure along the lines of his ghastly Centennial Hall. I presume the senators and congressmen, if asked, will proclaim once more that they have other priorities and will continue to do nothing to protect Filipino heritage from the clutches of the self-styled "Don Emilio." Obviously their fear of getting a bad press overrides any other consideration, including the responsibility of protecting the people's interest.

This shouldn't surprise any of us, since no officials intervened when the Ayala Museum, the work of National Artist Leandro Locsin, was demolished recently. Another Locsin oeuvre, the Mandarin Hotel, is wrecker's ball-bound as well to give way to still another mall to service the Roxas Triangle development that is believed to be doing poorly because of its lack of accessibility to a shopping area. (Well, there's Rockwell but that's Lopez and not Ayala.) An architect's name, national artist or not, cannot, it seems, withstand a developer's big ideas.

We have had a disturbing pattern of demolition ever since the religious orders abandoned Intramuros after the war and allowed its final destruction by bulldozers. They are as much to blame as the politicians who had their eyes on war damage claims and reparations and were thoroughly uninterested in preserving history or heritage.

Architectural historians have coined a new word, "erase-atecture," which just about describes what happened in Binondo and is right now happening in Malate and New Manila. Since no survey of historically significant and cultural structures was ever undertaken by government in these areas, we don't even know what we've lost. However, I do remember two outstanding residences by Andres Luna San Pedro that were lost to the wrecker's ball without a single legislator opening his mouth.

But even if Metro Manila is a lost cause, there are still urban areas in the provinces whose preservation is worth fighting for. Iloilo is one of them. So is Dumaguete. What might help is a nationally sponsored program that offers financial incentives to cities that agree to survey their historic resources and appoint commissioners with training in architecture, archaeology or city planning. It might also help if the city engineer would bother to check the age or history of a structure before granting a permit for demolition.

The point of all this is that, with the tide of increasing globalization and homogenous development, government should find ways of preserving the threads of continuity to the past by preserving architectural heritage and ensuring that the people have something to be proud of in an age of standardizing modernization.

Still much to riot about

YOUNG BLOOD

Adelfo Cyrus Alanis

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

OVER a get-together and bowling game with some classmates in high school, a friend of mine, perhaps bugged by a question he had wanted to ask for a long time blurted out: "Why does your organization seem to be constantly engaged in rallies and such?" Then he went further by stating a common, but nonetheless misconstrued, observation that whoever is at the helm of this godforsaken country, as sure as night turns to day, our group can be expected to question and condemn him.

These questions and observations do not come as a surprise to us. Some people still harbor such sentiments towards our organization, Bayan Muna, and other cause-oriented organizations and groups that have been lumped together under the term "civil society." Although this public impression carries more than a grain of truth, it also needs to be clarified.

To answer my friend's questions fully would require a short discourse on Philippine history, for which this space will not allow. While it is true that Filipinos are largely ambivalent about the role played by the United States in putting our country in its present dreadful condition, much has already been written that upsets the illusion of US benevolence. Alternative history has made inroads that truly offer an alternative account of US colonial rule and hegemony in the Philippines.

The Filipino people, especially the masses, may not find it easy to articulate their feelings, but the aftereffects of the continuing history of US dominance are surely being felt, culturally, politically and of course, economically. Indeed, a growing number of people are becoming conscious of the real state of the nation: ruled by an elite few that continue to foster subservience to foreign interests, while at the same time safeguarding their own interests. The widespread presence and influence of political dynasties is one manifestation of this condition.

To illustrate, President Macapagal-Arroyo has frequently alluded to the glory of her father, former President Diosdado Macapagal and has claimed this for her won. Other family names easily come to the minds of most Filipinos, given their positions not only in government but also in other lucrative segments of society.

Going back to the question. When President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office after Edsa II, it was the opinion of many Filipinos that she was merely an "incidental beneficiary" of people power. Definitely, it was not she whom the people wanted as Erap's successor. Thus, even as she prides herself in being "the President of Edsa II," she can never really claim any glory for such a historic event wherein the Filipino people, having endured enough suffering, decisively ousted a corrupt and criminal President.

GMA's detachment from the spirit and principle of Edsa II is further betrayed by recent moves of some administration officials tending to favor giving Erap a "Christmas furlough." Such moves were viewed not with just a small amount of trepidation as an initial "soft-launch" leading to the ousted president's transfer to a more comfortable house arrest. The permission given to Erap to bathe in the "healing waters" of a nunnery in Caloocan was seen by many sectors as a strong signal that the Macapagal administration was going easy on Erap and could even be a sign of her readiness to give him absolution altogether.

It is quite ironic to invoke "humanitarian grounds" to argue for the grant of special favors to a former president who has not been known for his moral uprightness. And what could the nation gain from such gestures. As one colleague put it, "I am willing to bet my last centavo that Erap's house arrest will not unite the nation, or make the economy go forward."

But it certainly shows what this administration's real preoccupation is when top officials talk as if a corrupt former president's yuletide cheer is more important than assuring millions of toiling Filipinos a decent meal, at least on Christmas Day.

We cannot discount the fact that these planned concessions are politically motivated. Much like a snake would shed its skin, depending on the mood swings in the political climate, and that of her own, GMA is willing to forget about meting out justice to someone who has betrayed the Filipino people just to win over to her side the Estrada camp and those people who have been misled into putting their money—their lives, even—on the line for the sake of Erap. Further victimizing the deposed president's supporters, GMA and her "emissaries" are using what remains of Erap's influence with the *masa* to bring the votes and ensure the administration party's victory in 2004.

So, to my friend, Aries Sesante, who has been pestering me to find a way to get his name published in a newspaper, I hope that this article will answer your questions and those of other people who, by now, should have developed an appreciation for the need for continued dissent in the face of truly "riotous" developments.

Adelfo Cyrus Alanis, 25, is a member of the staff of Bayan Muna.

THEY SAID

Cause of division

"Since I am among the principal figures in the divisive national events of the last two or three years, my political efforts can only result in never ending divisiveness."

—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, announcing she would not contest the 2004 elections

Proud to serve

"My pride in serving under this administration has quadrupled. I am proud to be a Filipino."

—Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, reacting to President Macapagal's "ultimate sacrifice" not to run in 2004

Hard to let go

"Of course when you like a president, you like for her to serve forever."

—National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, expressing disappointment over President Macapagal's decision not to contest the 2004 elections

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Rising up to GMA's challenge

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's decision not to stand for reelection in the 2004 elections deserves praise and commendation. GMA has strongly expressed her "capacity for sacrifice" and such an evaluation of herself has finally become evident in this latest pronouncement.

The past year has seen the administration incessantly being attacked and criticized, something which is undeniably characteristic of Philippine media and society. Relentless politicking brought to the surface scandals and exposés too many for the public to fully digest.

We hope the new year will bring change in our lives. Now is the chance to get rid of our pessimistic attitudes and strike a balance between cynicism and confidence. While vigilance is crucial, we should not turn our backs on the hope gleaming amid the seeming hopelessness of Philippine politics. Even the INQUIRER, which has been known to be critical of the administration, has shown its fairness in expressing optimism that the President's move may lead the country into unity.

GMA's "sacrifice" is therefore our call to let go of our ambitions and our desire for self-aggrandizement and to start thinking of the interest of the nation. We have attacked the administration consistently and watched its every move. But we failed to see how many sectors are equally deserving of criticism for what we have done or didn't do or for simply having the wrong attitude. It is time to give something of ourselves, and though gratification may be delayed, there is hope that some good will come of it.

Whether or not GMA's move is sincere, we should earnestly respond to the challenge she has hurled. We should not remain comfortable with graft and corruption or influence peddling. There is something that can be done.

GMA's decision not to run in 2004 will not move mountains and eliminate all country's problems. The point is for us to believe that it will and to act according to that faith. Let us all make the sacrifice.

—ANGELI ANGELES ALAGCAN,
chairperson, Union of Journalists of the Philippines-UP,
Ilang-ilang Residence Hall,
UP Diliman, Quezon City

Running just to stay where we are

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo put it rather simplistically when she said in her Rizal Day speech that she reduced the ranks of the unemployed from the four million she inherited from Joseph Estrada to three million, when she created one million jobs during the 18 months she has been in office. She forgot, or ignored, one factor: the population growth rate.

With a growth rate of 2.3 percent, about 1.8 million babies are born every year, adding a million children to the number of those who enter school when they are 6 years old, if not adding the same number to the labor force (15 years old and over), to put it conservatively.

This is borne out by the National Statistics Office, which estimated the labor force in October 2002 to be about one percent higher than the estimate of 33.4 million a year earlier. The labor force participation rate however declined from 67.5 percent in October 2001 to 66.2 percent in October 2002. Creating one million jobs a year will not reduce unemployment by that number, but only keep the jobless rate stagnant.

That is the reason government should push for a family planning program to go hand in hand with its development strategies. Otherwise, as Robert McNamara said in the 1970s, without population control, one will be plodding, plodding, only to find at the end of the day that he is still where he was when he started plodding.

—NATI NUGUID, nati@nuguid.de

Questions about RP football team

DO we have a national football team? Has it been named? How many players are there? Has it been training? Where has it been training? Is the team preparing for the Tiger Cup in Indonesia/Singapore? Is it going to compete? Is it leaving soon, or has it already left?

Are the players good looking, of show-biz quality? Or are they just good football players? If yes, then why isn't the Philippine Football Federation (PFF) talking about them?

Is this a secret project? Why is it so hush-hush? Is the PFF hiding them from us? Is the team lousy?

Is the team expected to win every game or lose every game? Will the results be published, win or lose? Will there be press coverage at all?

How much will be spent on this team? Do they even have a budget? Or is money no problem? How much allowance will each player get? Do they get cash rewards if they win, like other national athletes?

Does the team have a sponsor? A political godfather? What uniform will it wear? Adidas? Umbro? Coke? Unicef? Or Tindahan ni Aling Nena? And what brand of rubber shoes will they wear? Adidas? Nike? SM? Greggs?

Will they be fully equipped? Or do they have to bring their own footballs?

Do they have a manager? What's his name? Is he good looking? Do they have a coach or trainer? Is he Brazilian? Or German? Or Italian, Spanish or Argentine? None of the above? Who's in charge of this team?

Is it a tall team or a short team? Is it fast or slow? Does it have strikers? Or are there no plans to score "goals"? Are the players young or are they old? Too young or too old? Who are the stars of this team? Do these guys have pictures, or drawings of themselves?

Will we ever hear anything about this team? Will the PFF ever tell us? Will the PSC tell us? Or the POC?

Does anyone in government even know? If no one knows, why not?

Will this team be an embarrassment or can it make us proud?

Does anyone even care about Philippine football?

—EDUARDO FORMOSO,
everythingfutbol@hotmail.com

Is Bush the third anti-Christ?

THE WAR preparations of the Bush administration against Iraq has in the past few months made me doubly interested in Nostradamus, the famous seer, once again. He seems to have scored another hit with his twin towers prophecy.

But what struck me recently was a video documentary shown on television which identified the name given by Nostradamus to the so-called third Anti-Christ. This name was confirmed in a book I saw at a bookstore. The name given is rather ominous because it is so uncannily close to a leading head of state identified with US war preparations. The name is Mabus.

Although Saddam Hussein is demonized in the Western press, clearly Nostradamus identifies US President George W. Bush as the third Anti-Christ. In Nostradamus' predictions, a war launched by the third Anti-Christ will cause widespread global destruction. Although it appears that Bush is using the impending war to revive the US economy and sustain his popularity and chances at reelection, the war could lead to consequences far worse than Bush ever imagined.

It's time that Bush is warned that if he pushes through with his war against Iraq, he could be just confirming Nostradamus predictions that he is indeed the third anti-Christ.

—Elias Ubaldo, Los Angeles, CA

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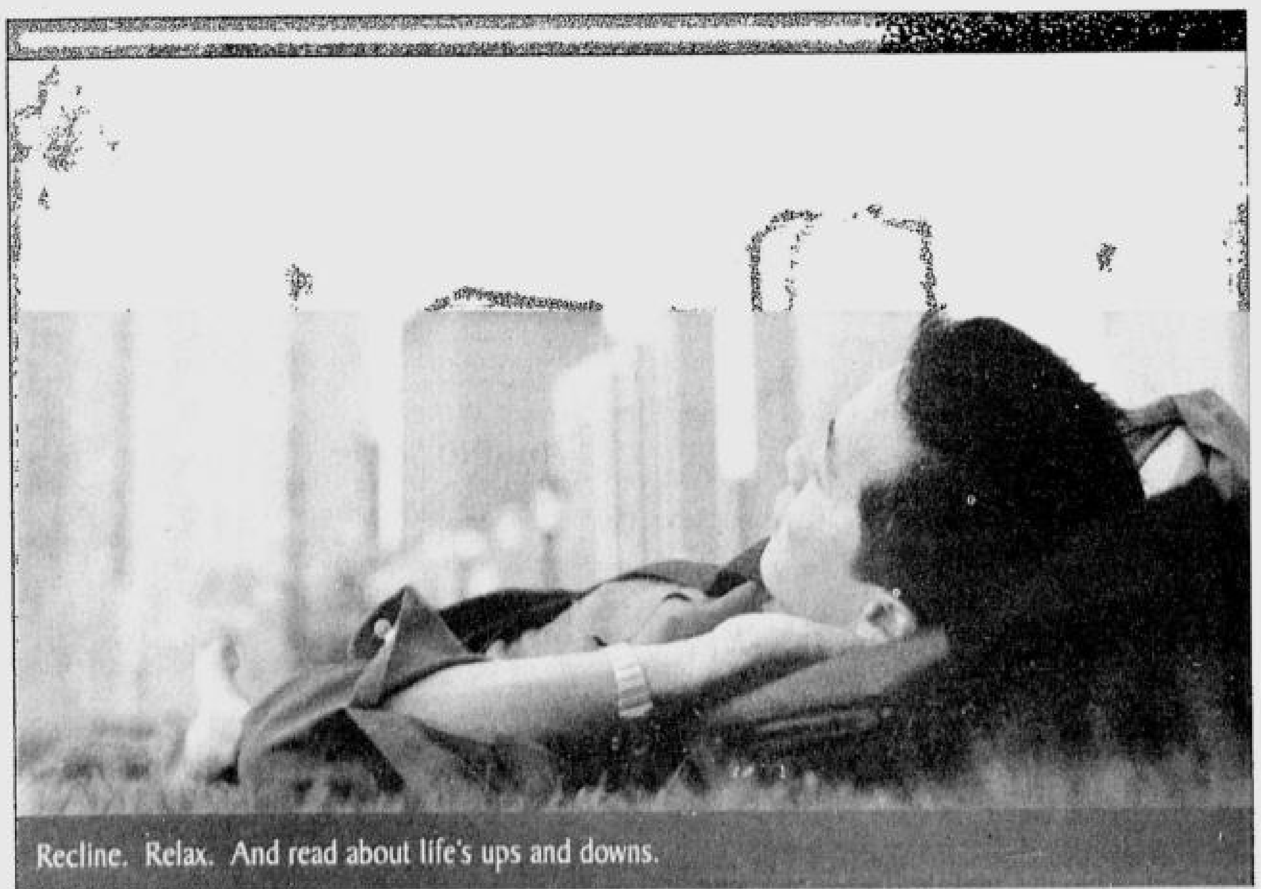
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BUSINESS INQUIRER

Left behind again

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

IMAGINE making a 30-kilometer land trip (about the distance from Manila to Calamba, Laguna) in 15 minutes.

Impossible? That's what it takes using Shanghai's new "maglev" train, which for its initial phase is running between the city's financial district and its international airport. The maglev is now the world's fastest passenger train system, surpassing speeds of the Japanese bullet train or the French TGV.

"Maglev" means "magnetically levitated," referring to the way the trains are suspended about 1 cm above the tracks by powerful magnets, rather than running directly on rails. This suspension allows cruising speeds of about 400 kilometers an hour, faster than a small light plane. No wonder the Chinese premier, Zhu Rongji, who was at the maglev's inauguration, called the train a "miracle."

I don't want to gush too much about the technology. I think it's more important we learn from all this, the maglev train being the latest reminder that China, a country supposedly more underdeveloped than we are, is now hurtling rapidly into a bold future, leaving us far behind.

The first, and most important, lesson from all this is that a mass transit system is essential for an economy to grow, moving people and goods as efficiently as possible. The Chinese know this, and have invested in the last 10 years in modernizing their transportation infrastructure. In Shanghai, for example, the maglev train is only one small part of the city's mass transport system. Already in place are buses and rapid trains within the city, including an impressive line that shoots across the Huangpo river, connecting the older western part of the city to an ultra-modern eastern financial district.

I need not go into details to describe the mass transit systems in our cities, except to say they waste so much of people's time and energy. The economic losses run into billions of pesos each year from reduced workers' productivity, illnesses from pollution, and gasoline wasted from idling engines.

The Chinese and our other Asian neighbors know that efficient mass transit systems are good for tourism as well. The Chinese now have a 200-kilometer highway linking Shanghai to Hangzhou, a major tourist destination, taking all of three hours of a leisurely drive, including breaks for *ngiao ngiao* (the Chinese euphemism for peeing). That's about the distance from Manila to Baguio, which can take a harrowing six or seven hours.

The Chinese are not content with the three-hour trip between Shanghai and Hangzhou. They're now talking about a maglev train connection which would cut travel time down to about half an hour. They're also thinking of a Shanghai-Beijing line, which would whittle travel time down from the current 15 hours to an amazing three.

The second lesson to pick up from the Chinese is that the infrastructure for transportation must be built rapidly, to keep up with the needs of the times. The 30-kilometer maglev line was completed within a year, again in stark contrast to the "progress" we've been making on the Sta. Mesa-Aurora Boulevard segment of our Light Rail Transit, a paltry distance of about six kilometers that was started during Fidel Ramos' presidency and might end up being inaugurated by him if he is reelected in 2004.

Trains would have been the way to go for the Philippines, providing low-cost and safe land travel, but our railway system never got off the ground, despite promises from politicians, and what's left of it continues to deteriorate. Contrast our situation with that of neighboring Southeast Asian countries, which have even revived old luxury train lines such as the Eastern & Oriental to attract tourists who want to just chug along, taking in the countryside from the comfort of the train. Here, we advise tourists to be ready to duck while on the train because people living by the tracks hurl stones at the train. Well, stones or worse, and I don't just mean *ngiao-ngiao*.

Lesson three from the maglev trains in Shanghai: learn to use foreign technologies. The maglev is an interesting example of what globalization could be, where two parties benefit. Maglev technology was developed by the German companies Siemens AG and ThyssenKrupp, which also invested $1 billion to build the Shanghai system, knowing that this could showcase their technology to bring more contracts from other Chinese cities as well as other countries.

The Chinese are not about to be passive recipients of German technology. Almost at the same time they inaugurated the Shanghai maglev, they rolled out their local version from the Changchun Passenger Train Factory in the northern province of Jilin. The Chinese maglev's maximum speed is "only" about 96 kilometers an hour, but give them time and they'll perfect the technology, as they're doing now with computers, television sets, DVDs and other electronic goods.

The Japanese started it all, learning to adopt what they could from the West. The South Koreans and the Taiwanese followed suit, and now it's the mainland Chinese. Our East Asian neighbors weren't content to remain consumers. They sent out their best young students to train abroad, even while bringing in the world's knowledge by translating or reprinting technical books. They imported foreign goods, not so much to consume but to dismantle and to copy.

Filipino households used to be filled with Japanese electronics. Then the Sony and Panasonic brands began to give way to Korean and Taiwanese brands like Samsung, Standard and Acer. The next wave has started, with products from China with brand names like Konka and Amoisonic. The quality isn't always too reliable but remember how the "Made in Japan" label evolved as well, with connotations of inferiority in the 1960s to its present status, where it is as good, if not better, than a "Made in the U.S.A." or "Made in Germany" label.

Don't be surprised if we eventually begin to import Chinese buses: the Chinese have developed their own sleek lines copied from European vehicles. Eventually, if we come to our senses about developing our railways, we just might have to import Chinese trains, perhaps the surplus ones they want to discard as they switch over to their own locally produced maglev.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

N. Korea defiant amid diplomatic efforts

SEOUL—South Korea was expected yesterday to present US and Japanese officials its plan to defuse the North Korean nuclear crisis as diplomatic initiatives gathered pace and UN nuclear inspectors looked set to give the North another chance to change its mind.

But reclusive North Korea remained defiant, denouncing Washington's missile defense system and threatening the United States with destruction if it launched a nuclear attack over Pyongyang's suspected atomic weapons program.

The board of the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), was to meet in Vienna on Monday to hear a report from the two inspectors Pyongyang expelled last week.

The IAEA, which could report North Korea to the UN Security Council for breaching its nonproliferation commitments, was expected to give the beleaguered communist state the chance to recant and abandon all attempts to develop nuclear weapons.

In Washington, South Korean officials were to present Seoul's plan to US and Japanese delegates at a regular meeting of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group. The plan is believed to call for a US guarantee of North Korea's security in return for Pyongyang scrapping its weapons program.

"The Seoul government's approach to the North Korean nuclear issue is solving it in a peaceful way and through diplomacy," foreign ministry spokesperson Kim Euy-taek told Reuters. "Our mediation plans will be discussed at the talks with the United States and Japan in Washington."

Tension has risen since late December when North Korea ejected IAEA inspectors and fired up a nuclear reactor mothballed under a 1994 deal in which it agreed to end such work in exchange for fuel oil supplies from the United States and allies.

Washington halted the oil shipments from December after saying Pyongyang had admitted to a covert nuclear program.

So Jae-young, an economic specialist at Daehan Investment and Trust, said Seoul appeared to be playing its cards just right.

"The possibility of success of the (South) Korean government's diplomatic tactics is looking positive, and the direction of its efforts seems just right," he said.

"Directly dealing with either North Korea or the United States wouldn't be reasonable, but cooperating with a third country, such as Japan, China or Russia, would benefit us."

North Korea, which says it started up the reactor as an act of self-defense, slammed Washington's national missile defense system on Monday, saying it was part of a "cunning trick" to justify a US attack.

President George W. Bush said the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technology had increased the need for such a defense against attack by "rogue states" such as Iran, Iraq and North Korea, his so-called "axis of evil."

North Korea said it had "increased its self-defensive military capability" to cope with the "US intensified policy to invade and stifle it with nukes." *Reuters*

US prepares post-war plan for Iraq

WASHINGTON—The White House is finalizing plans to administer a democratic Iraq after the ouster of Saddam Hussein, including provisions for US troops staying in the country for at least a year-and-a-half, the New York Times reported Monday.

Although US President George W. Bush in the past has expressed distaste for "nation building," the project to govern Iraq has been deemed necessary, one top Bush adviser told the Times, to "keep the country whole."

Under the plan, a civilian administrator—perhaps designated by the United Nations—would run the country's economy, rebuild its schools and political institutions, and administer aid programs, The Times said.

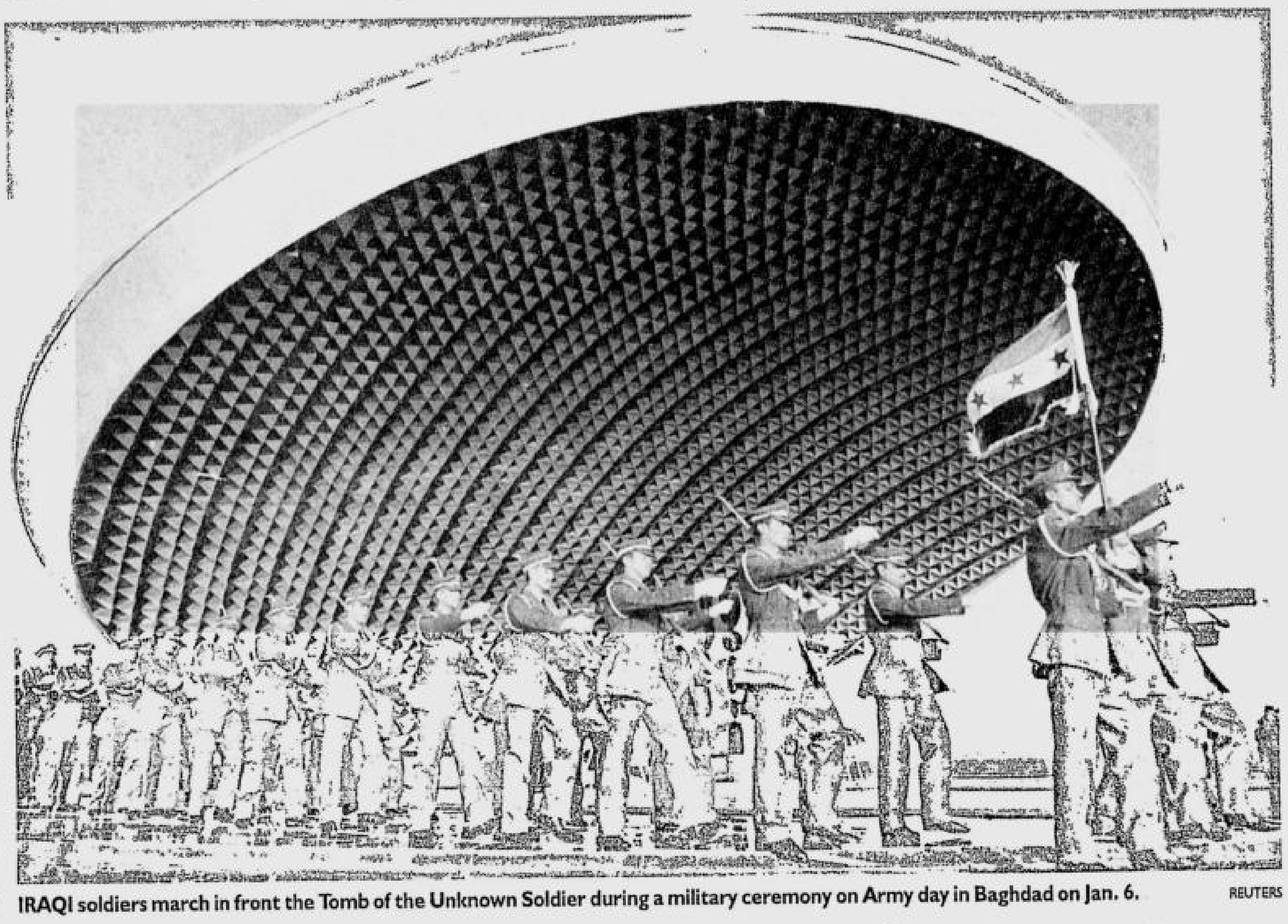
Military trials would be held for only the most senior Iraqi leaders, while people in the government bureaucracy who helped bring down the Saddam Hussein regime may be offered leniency.

The country's oil fields would quickly be taken over to pay for reconstruction, the report said, citing unnamed US security officials.

But the Bush administration is still debating how to protect oil fields during the conflict and how an occupied Iraq would be represented in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, if at all, according to the report.

The White House has rejected for now the idea of creating a provisional government before any invasion, the Times reported.

The democratization plan, which US officials have been developing for several months, would amount to the most ambitious American effort to administer a country since the occupations of Japan and Germany at the end of World War II, according to the daily. *AFP*



IRAQI soldiers march in front the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier during a military ceremony on Army day in Baghdad on Jan. 6. REUTERS

US to field 100,000 troops for invasion

WASHINGTON—The US military is assembling a ground force for a possible invasion of Iraq that could exceed 100,000 troops, the Washington Post reported Monday, quoting defense officials and analysts.

US ground forces would have enormous advantages in technology, firepower and mobility, with air supremacy, according to defense officials and analysts. But Pentagon officials are also putting an emphasis on achieving numerical supremacy.

"The goal of armed conflict is not to defeat your enemy," one senior defense official told the Post. "It's to take away your enemy's will to fight. And the best way to take away your enemy's will to fight is to bring overwhelming force to bear."

Numerically, a US invasion force of about 100,000 soldiers would be roughly equivalent in size to Iraq's Republican Guard, with about 80,000 troops, and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's elite Special Republican Guard, with about 15,000 troops.

There are an additional 300,000 soldiers in Iraq's regular army, according to the Post.

The US military buildup in the Persian Gulf has been underway for some time, but has accelerated as the Jan. 27 deadline nears for the first major report by UN weapons inspectors to the UN Security Council.

The US deployment is to include three to four heavy Army divisions, an airborne division, a Marine division and an assortment of Special Operations forces, the daily reported.

The US Army has summoned commanders from four of its best-equipped and most capable divisions for an exercise to be held at the end of the month called Victory Scrimmage, in which computer simulations will run through Iraq war scenarios, defense officials told the Post.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld signed a major deployment order on Dec. 24, and additional deployment orders are expected later this week, defense officials told the Post. *AFP*

Big hospital ship sets sail for Gulf area

WASHINGTON—A giant US Navy hospital ship equipped to treat wounded soldiers will set sail for the Indian Ocean early Monday, as the United States continues to beef up its forces in the Gulf region ahead of a possible war with Iraq, the Navy announced.

The announcement followed an unconfirmed media report that US special forces and CIA teams have already been secretly deployed to Iraq, despite President George W. Bush's repeated assurances that he had not yet decided whether to go to war with Iraq.

The floating 1,000-bed trauma center USNS Comfort will leave the port of Baltimore at 9:00 am for an undisclosed location near Southwest Asia "in support of the war on terror," said Marge Holtz, director of public affairs at the US Navy's Sealift Command.

The mission will mark the first time a large US hospital ship is being deployed in the area since the 1991 Gulf War, in which troops of a US-led international coalition ejected Iraqi forces from occupied Kuwait.

It will take the Comfort about three weeks to reach its secret destination, according to Holtz.

Although military officials remained tight-lipped about it, US media reports indicated the Comfort's first stop was likely to be the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia.

The vessel has 12 fully-equipped operating rooms, radiological services, a medical laboratory, a pharmacy, an optometry lab, a cat scan and two oxygen producing plants, according to military experts.

Its heliport is capable of landing large military helicopters, while other patients can be transferred aboard from other ships through side ports. *AFP*

Airport screening rules create few problems

CHICAGO—Knowing holiday travelers would be putting the country's new airport baggage-screening system to its first big test, Robert Chesniak gave himself 90 minutes to check his luggage Sunday at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. That was about 85 minutes more than he needed.

"That wasn't bad at all," said Chesniak, 53, after a security worker wiped his bags with a sheet of material designed to pick up traces of explosive chemicals for analysis in a detector device.

Around the country, air travelers had much the same impression on what was expected to be the heaviest travel day since Jan. 1, when a congressional order went into effect requiring that every checked bag at more than 400 of the nation's commercial airports be screened for explosives.

"It wasn't nearly as bad as we were led to believe it was going to be," said Roger Burlingame, who was traveling from Chicago to Phoenix. "A piece of cake," said his wife, Marni.

The Transportation Security Administration, in charge of the screening process, hired 56,000 employees to man the airports, including 23,000 baggage screeners and 33,000 passenger screeners.

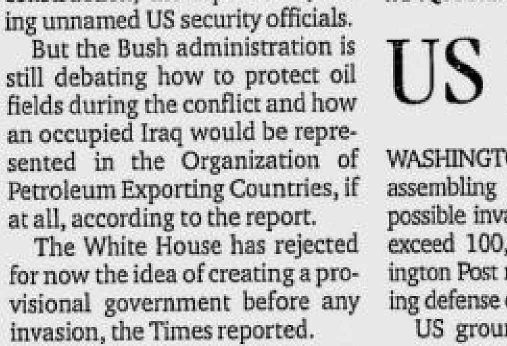
Spot checks on Sunday at several of the nation's airports showed no major delays caused by the new security measures developed since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

"It's about the same as before," said Richard Blackwell, who watched as screeners at Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport opened and inspected a sealed box of stereo equipment before a flight to Florida.

At the international terminal for Northwest Airlines at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, passengers waited up to 30 minutes longer than usual while their bags were sent through giant screening machines and workers ripped open taped boxes and rifled through their contents before closing them up again.

Before the attacks, only 5 percent of the roughly 2 million bags checked each day were screened for bombs. The federal government put an additional 23,000 screeners into airports to implement the new order that no checked bag be allowed through without verification that it contains no explosives.

"It may add a few minutes, but I think it's worth it," said Trina Frandsen, who checked a cardboard box and large suitcase at Kennedy for a flight home to Salt Lake City. *AP*



A STUDENT activist wears a skull mask during a rally in front of the presidential palace in Jakarta on Jan. 6. AFP

Protests rock Indonesia

JAKARTA—Hundreds of students and transport workers took to the streets in seven Indonesian cities on Monday, protesting at recent fuel hikes and burning effigies of President Megawati Sukarnoputri in some centers.

Different groups of protesters, some numbering 200 at a time, yelled slogans outside the presidential palace in Jakarta and other government offices in the capital, witnesses said.

"Seize the palace to subsidize the people. Topple Megawati and Hamzah, create a new government for the people," shouted 100 students, referring to the president and her deputy, Hamzah Haz.

Jakarta stocks, unsettled by the protests, dropped below the 400-point level for the first time in eight trading days, ending the morning session down 2.41 percent at 397.69.

Critics accuse the government of penalizing Indonesia's poor with the fuel price hikes, which took effect on Jan. 2 and coincide with jumps in electricity and phone tariffs. Fuel price hikes are a sensitive issue and have triggered social unrest in the past.

In Bandung in West Java province and in Central Java's Semarang, protesters torched effigies of Megawati. According to radio reports, demonstrations also hit the cities of Surabaya in East Java province, Denpasar in Bali, Medan in North Sumatra and Makassar in South Sulawesi. The single biggest protest was in Bali, with 300 people.

Police were deployed in most of the cities but took no action. Until Monday, there had only been minor, sporadic protests over the fuel price increases.

Police chief General Da'i Bachtiar, speaking before a Cabinet meeting, called on demonstrators not to disturb the public and said police would intervene if the street action got out of hand.

The fuel hikes, part of a series of phased increases designed to cut subsidies that burden the budget, are some of the largest since the world's fourth most populous country plunged into economic and political crisis in the late 1990s.

Among the hikes, the price of automotive diesel, widely used for public transportation, rose 22 percent. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Chavez warns foes

CARACAS—In a nationally broadcast speech preceeded by images of violence and mayhem in the streets of Venezuela, President Hugo Chavez Sunday warned he would not hesitate to deal firmly with his foes. "I will act when the time comes, my right hand will not tremble, and even less so my left hand," the embattled Chavez said. He paid tribute to two militant supporters of his government shot dead during clashes with the opposition, blamed the metropolitan police, widely viewed as sympathetic to his foes and pledged the culprits would be punished. *AFP*

US protects monuments

NEW YORK—US officials are employing 21st century technology to help rebuild America's most recognizable landmarks in case they are ever damaged or destroyed by terrorist attacks, the New York Daily News reported. Computer-imaging technology is being used to record the entire surface of New York's Statue of Liberty, for example, and the same technology would be used to reconstruct Washington's Capitol dome and other well-known landmarks and national monuments, the daily reported Sunday. Using cutting-edge laser technology, the interior and exteriors of the landmarks are thoroughly scanned, yielding geometric maps that can be stored in digital archives and computerized databases. Those blueprints can be used to build duplicates of the originals, the Daily News reported, adding that measurements are accurate down to six mm (one-quarter inch). *AFP*

Nude photo book

TAIPEI—A former Taiwanese politician who was involved in a high-profile sex scandal last year has split from her Chinese boyfriend after she decided to publish a nude photo book, it was reported Monday. Chu Mei-feng, 37, had planned to marry a Chinese man named Xu Changsheng on Feb. 15, or the Lantern Festival, the United Daily News said. It said Xu issued a statement in China Sunday saying he had to break from Chu as she plans to publish a nude photo collection in Singapore despite his objection. Chu shot to notoriety in December 2001 when she was filmed by an estranged friend having sex with a married man. *AFP*

Red-bellied black snake

SYDNEY—An Australian thief got more than he bargained for when he grabbed a bag off a car's passenger seat and found a venomous, red-bellied black snake inside. A police spokesperson said the thief stole the canvas bag after yanking open the door of a four-wheel drive at traffic lights in the Sydney inner-city suburb of Redfern late on Saturday. But the car's driver, snake handler Bradley McDonald, had the last laugh. The bag contained a 1.2-meter-long snake that he had just snared in a nearby car park. A bite from a red-bellied black snake, which can grow to up to 2.5 meters long, is very painful and could kill a small child. *Reuters*

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Pangasinan media hit mayor for threats

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—Media organizations in Pangasinan denounced San Carlos City Mayor Julian Resuello who threatened to "harm and kill" a radio commentator here.

Reports said the incident happened last Friday when Resuello confronted Orly Navarro, station manager and commentator of dzSD Super Radyo, over the latter's statement in his radio program that jueteng was rampant in San Carlos City.

Navarro, according to the Concerned Media Practitioners of Pangasinan (CMPP) and the Katipunan ng mga Mamamahayag sa Pangasinan (Kampana), was quoting a result of a survey conducted by the archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan.

"Several times during the confrontation, Mayor Resuello gestured to pull his gun from his waist, and many times, he motioned to slap Navarro," according to a statement of the CMPP and Kampana.

Resuello reportedly confronted Navarro while the latter was having dinner with two other reporters and mayors from Pangasinan at a hotel here.

But Resuello said he was "very sorry" for what he did, explaining that he did not mean to harm Navarro.

"I know I was wrong and I am sorry. But I am but a human being and my anger got the better of me. I admit my actions and words were ungentlemanly and unbecoming of a public official. But after my anger subsided, I wanted to say sorry to (Navarro) and the other reporters, but they had left (the hotel)," Resuello told the INQUIRER by telephone.

He said he was willing to apologize to Navarro and to the members of Pangasinan media or even issue a public apology for whatever pain he had caused them.

But he said he was "peeved" by Navarro's comments on his administration, particularly on jueteng operations in San Carlos City.

"Clearly, we consider Mayor Resuello's unfortunate behavior as an affront not only to Navarro but to the Pangasinan media as a whole. It was uncalled for and it was undoubtedly an abuse of his authority," the groups said.

"We believe that Navarro, as a legitimate broadcast journalist, was only doing his job in airing reports on unchecked illegal activities in different localities of the province, with no exception," they said.

They added that Resuello, in at least three instances, had confronted reporters over "negative" reports about San Carlos City and his administration.

Resuello said he bore no grudge towards Navarro or other local reporters. He claimed he "never countered" Navarro's allegations over the radio "because that would be an endless confrontation."

On reports that he threatened other reporters, Resuello claimed that he merely asked them not to "attack me below the belt (but) I asked them good-naturedly."

"If we close our eyes to these assaults on media, we shall lose ground to the enemies of press freedom. Those who now look at the other way may find one day, that no one remains to heed their pleas for help," CMPP and Kampana said.

Cebu transport groups hold off another strike

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The public transport associations in Cebu declared a ceasefire on their word war with Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña and temporarily shelved their plan to hold another crippling transport strike after President Macapagal-Arroyo assured them she would look into their grievances against the mayor.

Leaders of the groups under the Transport Unity Forum (TUF), decided not to push through with the transport strike set this week after President Macapagal-Arroyo met with them during a dinner she hosted at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel on Saturday night.

Alex Hugo, chairman of the Nagkahiusang Drivers sa Sugbo (Nadsu) on Sunday told the INQUIRER that the President had accepted their petition against Osmeña and assured the transport leaders she would take immediate action on their problems.

"The President gave us her time and she personally talked to us. She accepted our petition and assured us she would want to dialogue with the leaders in a much longer period soon. With her assurance, we maintain the status quo—no strikes yet," Hugo said.

The leaders of the six biggest groups of drivers and operators in Cebu urged the President to immediately act on their complaints against Osmeña.

They complained about the mayor's alleged "oppressive and high-handed" actions and policies, specially the collection of stiff traffic violation fines.

The TUF has been pushing for City Hall to condone the P122 million in accumulated fines unpaid since 1994. The city has threatened not to give them clearance for renewal of their franchises unless these fines are paid.

The transport leaders said the mayor was encroaching on the sole and exclusive function of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board on the issuance of franchises by requiring all public utility jeepney operators to secure an endorsement for a travel line from the Cebu City Traffic Operations Management.

But the mayor has refused to back down and has sought the backing of both Malacañang and the Department of Transportation and Communications for his plan to cancel franchises of transport operators who have committed many traffic violations.

Osmeña has also threatened to cancel travel lines of operators who have the worst traffic record. He said such policies would put back discipline into the streets.

Health execs allay fears on Baguio's cold weather

BAGUIO CITY—Although the weather in this city gets chillier every day, health officials have allayed fears of tourists and residents on the supposed danger in the sudden drop in temperature.

Dr. Florence Reyes, city health officer, urged the public to wear thick clothes during morning and night and remove them as well when it gets warmer in midday to avoid contracting pneumonia.

Reyes clarified that the plunging temperature is not the only reason behind the deaths of at least six residents in this mountain resort city, saying it is only an "aggravating factor."

"It's true that since last week, I've signed six death certificates caused by either asthma attacks or pneumonia. But there are several factors that contribute to their deaths. It's not the cold weather per se," she told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

She said some patients, especially older residents, died because their resistance to diseases had decreased or they had been suffering from other illnesses such as cardiovascular diseases for quite some time.

"Another factor is they have been bedridden for a long period or they did not heed some precautionary measures," she said.

The coldest temperature here recorded for this month is 10.2 degrees Celsius on Jan. 2, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

If this pattern persists in the next few days, it will surpass last year's record of 8.8 degrees Celsius on Jan. 4 last year, weather experts predict.

The mercury registered 11.4 degrees on Saturday and Sunday.

Reyes said some older residents could not take the biting cold so their health deteriorate.

She said the "extreme weather"—cold in the early mornings and nights but warm in midday—has triggered the increase in the number of respiratory illnesses here, like colds and cough.

Reyes said the city health department's statistician informed her that the number of pneumonia, bronchitis, asthma and respiratory tract infection cases in the city since November is "higher than normal."

She said most of their patients are children and those who are 60 and above. She has alerted health personnel in 16 health centers here on the outbreak of respiratory diseases.

"One way to protect our body from cough and colds is to drink plenty of fruit juices and water," she said. *Gobleth Moulic, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

SGT. AGUSTIN Sulleza tries out an M4 Carbinat during a training with an American soldier in Basilan. VAL HANDUMON

Mutilated remains of Tausug wife of soldier found in Iloilo

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A foul smell bugging residents of a remote village in Sta. Barbara, Iloilo turned out to be the mutilated remains of a 19-year old girl buried at the back of a house.

Chief Insp. Eugenio Espejo, Sta. Barbara police chief, said they found body parts of Sawiya Sanob, a Tausug, at about 8:30 a.m. behind the house of Dionesia Sulleza, the victim's mother-in-law, in Barangay Camambugan, Sta. Barbara, about 16 km northwest of here.

He said the victim's head, an arm and parts of her back were found in a sack inside a one-foot wide and four-foot deep hole covered with bamboo slats in Camambugan, located about five kilometers from the town proper.

Bones believed to be those of the victim were also found in a garbage pit four meters away.

Sulleza identified the decomposing remains through the victim's ring and wristwatch. These were brought to the Funeraria Somo for autopsy to determine the cause and time of death.

Espejo said the victim's husband, Army Sgt. Agustin Sulleza, 32, was a probable suspect based on their initial investigation.

Citing the testimony of Dionesia, Espejo said the couple arrived in the barangay from Manila two months ago for a vacation.

Last Nov. 21, while Dionesia, a member of the barangay council, was attending a meeting at the poblacion, Agustin informed her that the couple was leaving for Zamboanga City.

He allegedly told his mother that his wife was waiting for him in Barangay Dama near the highway going to Iloilo City. Dionesia had not received word from her son since then, according to Espejo.

Dionesia left for Manila on Dec. 21 for a vacation and returned only on Jan. 5. She asked the help of the police yesterday to investigate the foul odor from the back of her house.

Espejo said they had visited the area six times since before New Year's Day after receiving complaints from residents of foul odor but were unable to inspect the house because Dionesia was away on vacation.

Espejo said they were still determining the whereabouts of Agustin who is believed to have rejoined an Army Special Forces Unit based in Zamboanga City.

Before leaving for Zamboanga, he had told his mother that he had failed to report to his unit for 75 days.

Police found in Sulleza's house a copy of the Feb. 21, 2002 issue of the INQUIRER where Agustin appeared in a front page photograph along with an American soldier.

Globe cell site in Negros bombed

BACOLOD CITY—Unidentified suspects on Saturday bombed a cell site of Globe Telecom in Escalante City, Negros Occidental.

No one was hurt but the explosion damaged a portion of the cell site in Barangay Balintawak Poblacion in Escalante, about 98 km northeast of this city.

Senior Insp. Castor Laluma, Escalante City police chief, said unidentified suspects either fired an M203 or M-79 grenade launcher at the Globe cell site located beside the Balintawak Barangay Hall, at about 10:30 p.m. on Saturday.

He said the explosion damaged the cell site's RDLU apparatus, which contained the main cable, transmission, feeder and jumper cable wires. The police pegged the damage at P300,000. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

51 'colorum' buses plying Bicol routes seized

LEGAZPI CITY—At least 51 buses that illegally ply the Manila-Bicol route were apprehended by the Philippine National Police Traffic Management Group (TMG) last week.

This developed despite warnings by the government against illegal trips and the cancellation of franchises of some bus companies, including the controversial Falcon Bus Lines—a unit of which was involved in a tragic road mishap in Tagkawayan, Quezon late last year.

The accident claimed the lives of 33 passengers and injured six others.

TMG regional director Senior Supt. Apolinar Felipe said that during their three-day special operations from Dec. 31 to Jan. 2 along the Maharlika Highway, where all buses from Metro Manila going to Bicol and vice versa passed, they busted at least 51 buses with different violations in the use of their franchise.

This was the period where more buses go to Bicol due to the influx of passengers going home to their provinces for vacation while others started to go back to Manila.

Of the 51 buses apprehended, Felipe said, 30 units were out of line, eight were colorum, seven did not have any special permit to travel to Bicol and six committed breaches of franchise.

The apprehension of these illegally operating buses, according to Felipe, only covered Albay, Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte.

The TMG is still expecting reports of various violations from Sorsogon going to the Visayas, he said.

Felipe said they apprehended 49 colorum buses during the whole month of December.

Of the 49, four came from Masbate and two from Catanduanes. The rest were caught in the highways of Maharlika and in downtown Legazpi.

Felipe added that the recorded violations still exclude the non-wearing of seatbelt, no plate number attached and use of improvised plates.

He told the INQUIRER that they were expecting the influx of buses plying provincial routes, especially in Bicol since such period is the peak season for passengers.

But he warned that bus operators should just make sure their operations are legal.

"We will be relentless in chasing them if they continue to take advantage of the situation while violating our regulations." *Ronnie Lorejo, Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Spaniard kidnapped

MAMBURAO, Occidental Mindoro—A Spanish Christian church leader and resort owner was kidnapped inside his resthouse in Barangay Fatima, this town, on Dec. 29 by armed men who identified themselves as members of the New People's Army. Occidental Mindoro police director Sr. Supt. Artemio Gabriel identified the victim as Tony Lehman, 42, a Spanish-Jew church leader and owner of the Lehman Beach Resort in Barangay Fatima. But the NPA denied involvement in the kidnapping. Another INQUIRER source revealed that a kidnapping syndicate had already contacted his wife Christine and demanded P10 million for Lehman's release. ***Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Vice mayor yields

ILAGAN, Isabela—A vice mayor in Cagayan surrendered to the police after a local court issued a warrant for his arrest for a murder case. Vice Mayor Loreto Alipio Sr. of Buguey, Cagayan, however, immediately posted a P450,000 bail and was temporarily released. Alipio and his son PO2 Loreto Alipio Jr. are facing murder and frustrated murder charges for the slaying of three fish traders and their driver in Sta. Maria, Isabela on Nov. 7, 2002. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Cop found dead

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—A policeman in Angeles City was found dead in his house on Dec. 26 but police officials here said the victim died from an accidental firing. Reports said PO3 Cristobal Valdriz died after sustaining a bullet wound in the head. Valdriz's wife, Mary Joy, 30, reported seeing her husband dead at 6:30 a.m. in their house in Barangay Pulong Maragul, Angeles City. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Regional center

CALAPAN CITY—Because of its strategic location, Oriental Mindoro is becoming the regional center of Mimaropa (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan). On Dec. 16 last year, the regional office of the Register of Deeds was inaugurated at the provincial capitol. At present, the provincial government is looking for not less than two hectares of land here where the Philippine National Police regional office will be put up. ***Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

P5.5M lost in fire

PAGSANJAN, Laguna—More than P5.5 million worth of properties were burned after a seven-hour fire which gutted a gasoline station and the owner's house located at the town proper on Saturday here. Choy Dimasaka of the Pagsanjan Fire Department identified the owner of the damaged Caltex gasoline station as Raymond Ong, 30, a resident of the town. Dimasaka said the fire, which was caused by faulty electrical installation, started at Ong's residential house at about 12 noon and spread swiftly to the nearby gasoline station. ***Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Power sabotage

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The National Transmission Company here admitted that sabotage triggered the power outages that hit most parts of the city on New Year's Day. Bienvenido Palma Jr., officer-in-charge of the NTC-Southwestern Mindanao Area, said unidentified men had burned a power line in Barangay Sinawal. However, Palma said the NTC had no idea if the suspects belong to any group. ***Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Charged with stealing

BACOLOD CITY—A policeman was charged for allegedly stealing 21 milligrams of shabu and an improvised tooter inside the Bacolod City Police Office Crime Laboratory. PO1 Harold Villagracia denied the allegations, saying the missing items were never found in his possession. Villagracia, a perimeter guard at the BCPO, was seen inside the crime lab where pieces of evidence in criminal cases were kept. ***Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Senate, House split on Cha-cha

From page A1

economic slump and what we need now is unity, not division."

NPC bloc

In the House, however, the talk was already about which form of parliamentary system would be best for the country.

Tarlac Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, leader of the 63-strong Nationalist People's Coalition in the House, the second-biggest party, said he was strongly advocating a modified French-style system, with a president elected by the people and who retains certain powers, including being military commander in chief.

"Filipinos do not want to lose their right to choose their leader so we should have a president elected by the people," he said.

Teodoro, who contested the speakership in 2001, is the trusted political lieutenant of NPC chair emeritus Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. The San Miguel Corp. chair included Charter change in his platform when he ran for president in 1992. Two years ago, the NPC joined Speaker Jose de Venecia's so-called Sunshine coalition in Congress.

No party stand yet

Teodoro said the NPC did not have a party stand on Charter change but admitted that a majority of its members were for it.

"What the people need is Charter change" because no President can succeed "under this Constitution," he said:

"The maladies plaguing our country are rooted in this Constitution. I will support it (Charter change) a hundred percent. It's what the people want and it's what the people need," Teodoro said in a phone interview.

Nachura said there was yet no consensus in the House about which type of parliamentary system to adopt. He said there was also a need to inform the public about the features of the proposed forms of government so that they will be enlightened and have a say in its adoption.

Going full blast

With President Macapagal-Arroyo not contesting the 2004 elections, the House is going full blast for Charter change.

Within the month, according to Nachura, the House will approve Concurrent Resolution No. 16, which proposes three areas for consideration by the constituent assembly: review of the form of government, amendment of certain economic provisions and provision of a transition mechanism for the shift to the new form of government.

Nachura said supporters of Charter change come from all political parties, including the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

The Liberal Party, headed by Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad, will meet this weekend to discuss its stand on Charter change, among other issues.

"If this is approved, since this is a concurrent resolution we will ask for the concurrence of the Senate," Nachura said.

Senate vote

Nachura said he understood that a majority of senators reportedly were in favor of Charter change, though not necessarily for a constituent assembly. "From what we were told, we can get a majority for Charter change in the Senate, but it's not very clear yet if we can get the same majority (for constituent assembly) immediately," Nachura said in a phone interview.

He said Sen. Edgardo Angara, his Senate counterpart, was in favor of a constituent assembly as well, as were Sen. Teresa Aquino Oreta and "a number of other senators."

He said he also understood that Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was not particular about the mode of change, whether it was a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly.

But in his news briefing, Drilon said that while the Senate majority was not entirely closed to the idea of Charter change, this should be done through "a constitutional convention and after the 2004 presidential elections."

Drilon also deployed another argument against constituting both Houses as a constituent assembly: the issue of whether the Senate and the House will be voting separately on the Charter amendments or as one.

"The argument is strong that since this is a bicameral body, we should vote separately [on the amendments]. To us, it is academic that we are taking the position that we will not agree [to vote as one with the House on the amendments]," he said.

Angara had earlier said that if the consultations showed that "there is a need for an immediate change [to the Constitution], we should use the constituent assembly."

"We convert the present Congress into a constituent assembly and that will be the faster and more economical rule," he had said.

But the opposition senator had also pointed out that if Charter change is undertaken through the "leisurely and stately pace of a constitutional convention, some of our colleagues from the non-government organizations would favor this on the theory that a very important change like Charter change should not be rushed."

Parliamentary form

The shift from a presidential to a parliamentary form of government is one of the main amendments expected to be introduced to the Constitution, on the theory that the present system lends itself to government gridlock.

But there is also a growing clamor from Visayas and Mindanao lawmakers, like opposition Senators John Osmeña and Pimentel, for the country to adopt a federal form of government.

Nachura said the resolution, which his committee filed last Dec. 16, could be taken up when session resumes next week.

"I don't expect it [the debates] to be protracted but we expect many questions. We're ready for them," he said.

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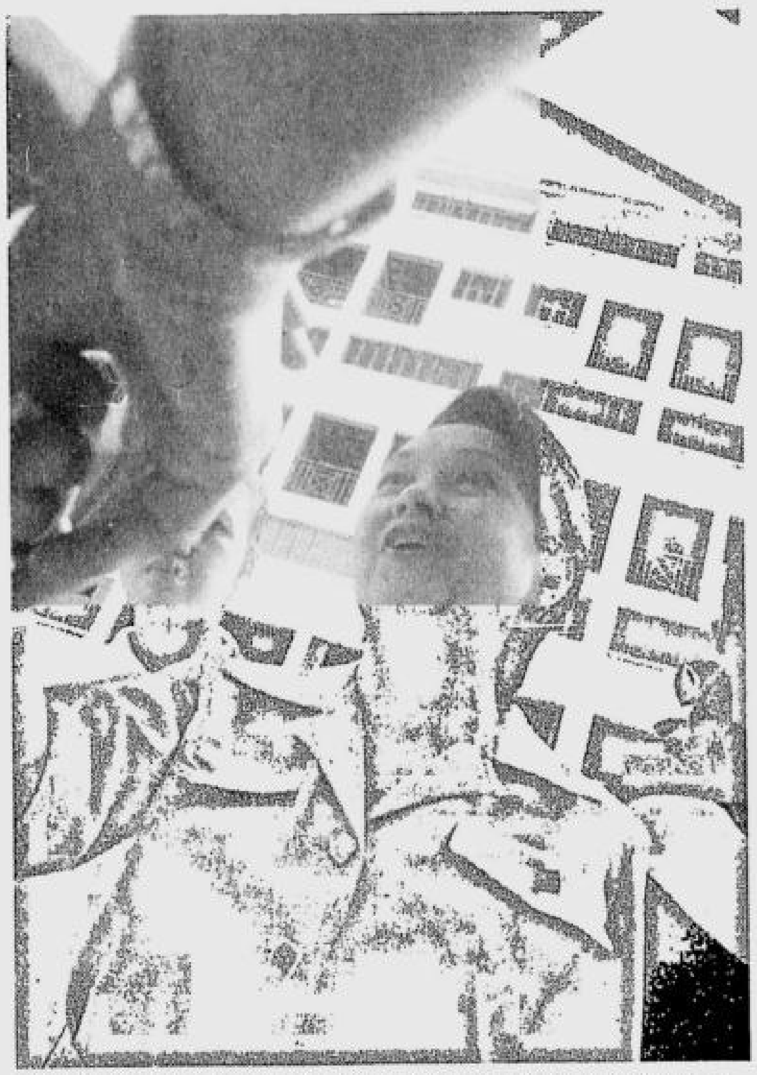

PRESIDENT Macapagal is greeted by residents during an inspection of the Residencias de Manila medium rise building housing project in Pandacan, Manila with Mayor Lito Atienza and Housing Secretary Mike Defensor. VAL HANDUMON

Gov't housing . . .

From page A1

the reduced rates would apply to new loans, not existing ones. He also made it clear that private banks were not covered by the President's order, but said he hoped the other banks would eventually follow suit.

Half a million families stand to benefit from the order over the next two years, Bunye also said on government radio.

"The President has ordered government financial institutions involved in the housing program to cap their interest rate at 6 percent for low- and medium-cost housing," Bunye said.

The banks now charge 9 percent annually, including service charges, for low-cost housing loans, he added.

Centerpiece program

Government-sponsored housing for the poor is one of eight centerpiece projects that Ms Macapagal identified as her administration's priorities during the last 18 months of her term. The projects include a mix of long-term goals such as decongesting Metro Manila and short-term initiatives such as lowering cargo costs from Mindanao to Luzon.

The President listed the eight projects during the first Cabinet meeting of the year, held last Friday. It was also the first such meeting after her Rizal Day announcement that she would not contest the 2004 presidential elections.

Yesterday, she inspected a medium-rise housing project for city government employees, teachers and policemen in Pandacan, Manila.

The Buhayin ang Maynila (Revive Manila) project is a four-story building with 100 housing units located beside the Estero de Pandacan and the Nagtahan Bridge. Each unit has a floor area of 36 to 45 square meters and costs between P800,000 and P1 million.

The project has electricity, regular water supply from two 5,000-gallon water tanks, four septic tanks and an elevator.

It is the first of nine medium-rise buildings to be developed in Metro Manila for low- and middle-income workers.

The others are the Smile Citihomes Annex in Caloocan City, Isabelle Garden Villas and Amvel Mansion Park in Parañaque City, GA Tower in Mandaluyong City, Veridian Towers and NDC-Sucat Condo in Muntinlupa City, and the Sta. Fe Residential Mansion and Mystica Towers in Quezon City. *With a report from AFP*

Girl killed by stray bullet

From page A1

authorities on Sunday night or five days after the incident, according to Senior Supt. Felizardo Serapio, Bulacan police director.

Bondoc claimed that his gun, a .32 cal. pistol, "accidentally fired" when his daughter Joville pulled it from him while he was removing its magazine.

The gun was licensed, according to a report reaching the office of Chief Supt. Oscar Calderon, Central Luzon police director.

Reports reaching Calderon's office did not say what Bondoc's job was or why he was issued a firearm.

Bondoc's claim of an accident was received with skepticism by some of the girl's closest relatives in Barangay San Isidro I in Paombong, reports said.

Earlier reports gathered by investigators in Bulacan said the girl, after watching her neighbors explode firecrackers during the revelry, went to the back of their house to urinate. Witnesses said they heard a gunshot and saw the girl fall with a bullet wound in the head.

The elder Bondoc immediately went into hiding after the incident.

Criminal charges were being readied against Bondoc, who is now detained at the Bulacan provincial jail.

According to Calderon, Bondoc was identified as a result of "police investigation" and not by an informant.

This means that no one would get the P100,000 cash reward that Calderon earlier offered to any person who can provide a lead to the identity of the young Bondoc's killer.

Calderon cited police findings that the bullet was fired from a horizontal position or almost on the same level as the child's height.

Lotto pot to hit ₱130M

From page A1

millions of bettors chose the winning combination—7, 18, 25, 28, 41 and 49—in Sunday's draw.

This means that those who regularly take a punch at the moon can continue to do so, particularly for the draw scheduled on Thursday.

On that day, the number of players is expected to be even bigger than last Sunday, when the jackpot reached more than P117 million. That's P7 million more than the projection of P110 million.

Zabella, PCSO assistant general manager for lottery, said the jackpot for the Super Lotto 6/49 game had not been won since Nov. 14, when a player from the Visayas-Mindanao area snagged the P22.9-million prize.

He refused to disclose even the occupation and gender of the lucky bettor, saying that the PCSO was now more carefully protecting the identities of winners.

This stance of secrecy is an apparent result of the killing last October of an Antipolo City taxi driver who had earlier won a P19.6-million jackpot.

Zabella said about 20 million play the lotto every day. The biggest jackpot ever in its almost eight years of existence—P202 million—was shared by six winners last October.

The draw for the Super Lotto 6/49 game, wherein players pick out and bet on six numbers out of 49, is on Thursdays and Sundays. It is one of the five major lotto games run by the PCSO, the other four being the four- and six-digit games, the 6/42 and the 6/45 Mega Lotto. *Agnes E. Donato*

WILLIAM, GOTHONG & ABOITIZ, INC.

NOTICE OF ISSUANCE OF REDEEMABLE PREFERRED SHARES AS STOCK DIVIDENDS

Dear Stockholder:

On November 11, 2002, the Board and stockholders of William, Gothong & Aboitiz, Inc. (the "Company") approved the declaration of stock dividends in the form of redeemable preferred shares, each with a par value of ₱1.00 (the "Stock Dividends"). In a letter dated 12 December 2002, the Philippine Stock Exchange ("PSE") approved the Stock Dividends for listing on the Philippine Stock Exchange on January 07, 2003. Each stockholder-of-record as of close of business on 06 December 2002 ("Stockholder-of-Record") is entitled to one redeemable preferred share for every four common shares he/she/it owns as of close of business on 06 December 2002. All fractional shares will be paid in cash on the basis of par value.

Please be advised that as of today (January 7, 2003), the Company has made available to the office of its stock and transfer agent, the stock certificates pertaining to the Stock Dividends for distribution by the stock and transfer agent to each and every Stockholder-of-Record.

Manila, Philippines, January 7, 2003.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
By:

Tiu, Helen Go

Tiu, Helen Go
Corporate Secretary

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WG&A SuperFerry

Shape up or resign, Cabinet men told

From page A1

Tiglao will henceforth concentrate on his other function as the President's chief of staff.

Asked to comment on Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza supposedly being considered as press secretary to allow Bunye to become Ms Macapagal's full-time spokesperson, Tiglao said: "Announcements will be made at the appropriate time."

Braganza met separately with Bunye and Tiglao yesterday, according to a Palace insider.

Earlier in the day, Braganza said in an interview over radio station dzBB that "at present, there is an ongoing revamp or reshuffle" in the President's official family.

"She is looking for people who, in her view, can implement her programs," he said.

Asked if Bunye's post had been indeed offered to him and if he had accepted it, Braganza said: "We serve at the pleasure of the President.

"Whatever post she wants us to be in, we're ready to obey her order. It's not in our hands, it's up to the President."

Barbers said it was obvious that the performance of certain Cabinet members was below par despite the full support of the President and the people.

He said it was unnecessary for Cabinet officials to tender courtesy resignations at this time. Instead, he said, they should prove their worth within the time frame he had suggested.

Citing Hernando Perez's recent resignation as justice secretary, Barbers said the decision spared the President further embarrassment.

"Other Cabinet members must also do the same thing," he said.

Up to Friday

In a chance interview at the Palace, Bayani Fernando, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, said he was giving himself up to Friday to decide whether he would accept the offer for him to head the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The top DPWH post was vacated with the appointment of Simeon Datumanong as the new justice secretary in place of Perez, whom the extradited Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez had accused of extortion.

Emerging from a meeting with Ms Macapagal, Fernando indicated that he would accept the offer. "We don't want to disappoint the President," he said.

To his supposed wish to head both the MMDA and the DPWH, he said: "We're not greedy."

But Tiglao said that as of 2 p.m. yesterday, Fernando's appointment as public works secretary was not yet final.

He also said the President had asked him to work full-time as her chief of staff, a post to which he was formally appointed three weeks ago.

This would allow the administration to launch new reform and development initiatives in the next few months, he said.

"I'll be representing the President in pushing her eight-point program," Tiglao said, referring to the short list of priorities that she had earlier identified. The list included, among others, jump-starting the housing sector.

In Sen. Rodolfo Biazon's opinion, Malacañang should stop floating names from the opposition as likely to join the "unity government" if it wanted genuine cooperation from them.

"Instead of focusing on recruiting some of us to join the Cabinet, the better thing to do is to focus on issues rather than on personalities," Biazon said.

He said Malacañang officials should sit down with the leaders of the opposition to define possible areas of cooperation for the remaining 18 months of the administration.

Positive factor

Another member of the opposition, Sen. Edgardo Angara, said the President's "non-partisan declaration" that she would not run in the 2004 elections would be "a positive factor" for her new Cabinet choices during their confirmation at the Commission on Appointments.

"As long as the nominees meet the basic requirements of competence and integrity, there would be no problem for [them]," Angara, president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, said in a statement.

He also said that in the last 18 months of the administration, "Filipinos expect politicians to work on a single agenda to move the country forward."

"A lengthy grilling of Cabinet nominees who would have to pass the test of competence and integrity at the CA would run counter to moving the country forward," he said, adding:

"[The President] has 18 months to accomplish what she has to do, and the CA will not be an obstruction to her agenda."

But Danilo Ramos, secretary general of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, said the rumored replacement of Braganza at the Department of Agrarian Reform promised no genuine uplift in the lives of the impoverished peasantry.

He said the KMP expected the administration to find Braganza's successor among the "pro-globalization clique of agri-businessmen," as what happened at the Department of Agriculture.

"Who will it be?" Ramos said. "Another agri-businessman and rabid pro-globalization like [Agriculture Secretary] Luis Lorenzo? Or a landlord like Eduardo 'Danding' Cojuangco Jr., who owns three-fourths of Negros Island?"

Ramos also said Braganza's exit from the DAR would bring "no fundamental changes" in the way the government was implementing "bogus" land reform through the 15-year-old Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

He said the CARP itself had engendered hardships for farmers in the form of land confiscation and cancellation of land certificates, land use conversions and the "criminalization" of cases arising from agrarian disputes.

On the other hand, Datumanong's appointment to the DOJ has elicited mixed reactions from its officials and employees.

As expected, acting Justice Secretary Merceditas N. Gutierrez led four other justice undersecretaries in pledging their support.

But those in the middle rank—particularly state prosecutors—expressed reservations over Datumanong's unexpected appointment. Their main reason: Datumanong's relatively insufficient experience vis-à-vis the judicial system. *With reports from Rocky Nazareno, Volt Contreras, and Michael Lim Ubac*

Tricycle drivers win one-month reprieve

From page A1

the Palace.

Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun said MMDA Resolution No. 02-36 would be suspended for a month while the government conducted a review.

The National Confederation of Tricycle Drivers and Operators Association of the Philippines (Nactodap) said the resolution jeopardized the livelihood of thousands of tricycle drivers.

"Its implementation this January is the start of our sector's Calvary. This government continues to create laws that push our members deeper into poverty," said Ariel Lim, Nactodap national president.

But in his weekly news briefing, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said the drivers need not worry about losing their source of livelihood.

He said the resolution did not apply to those who already have franchises, whether they have two-stroke engines or not.

"The drivers think we are phasing out the tricycles with two-stroke engines. But only those applying for franchises would be affected," Fernando said.

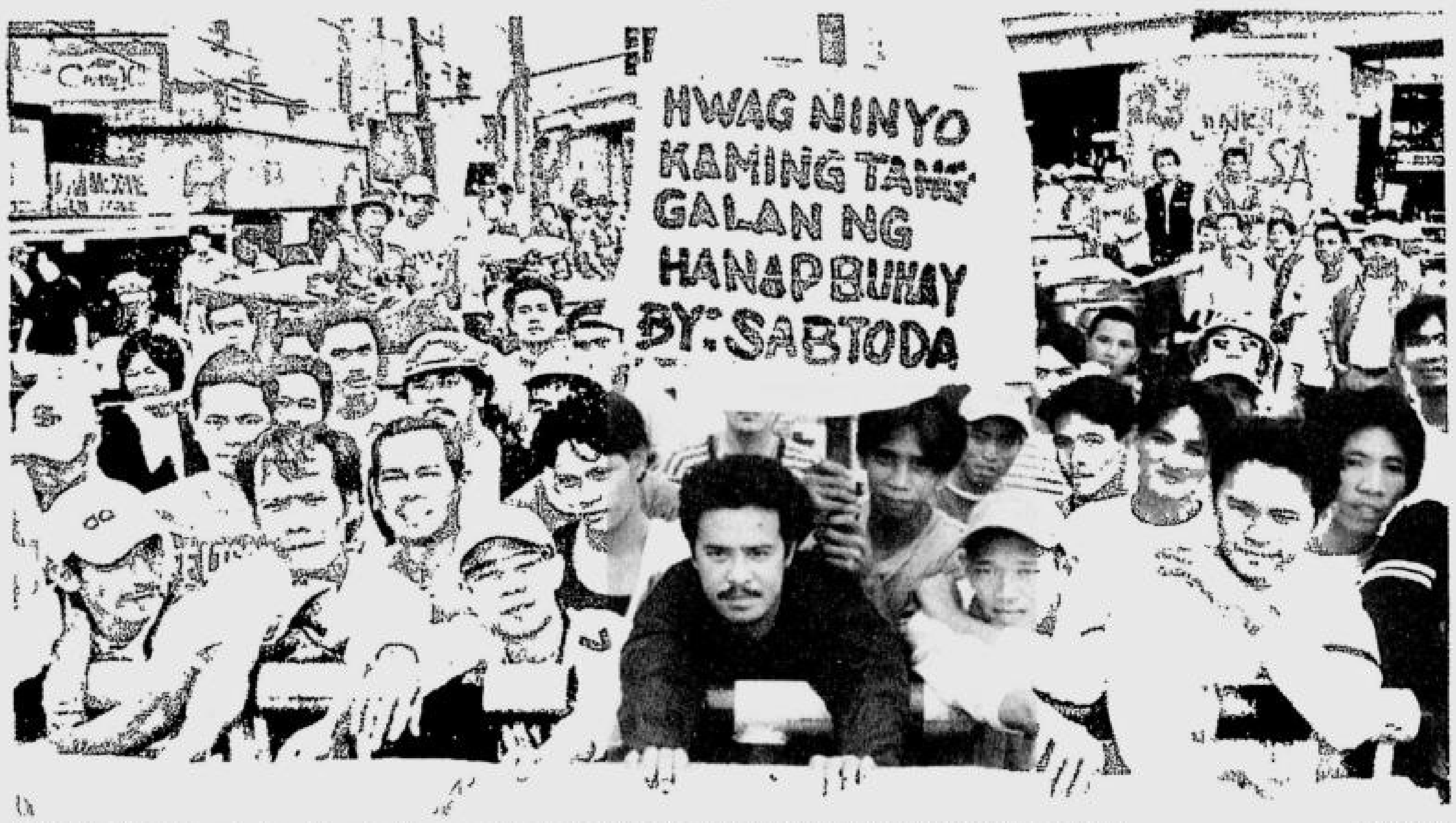
He also said the temporary moratorium on two-stroke engines would actually benefit the tricycle drivers.

"We're taking care of their livelihood so that the number of tricycles won't swell that much and they won't have a lot of competition. This way, they'll be able to earn enough," he said.

Fernando also pointed out that most Metro Manila towns and cities had already stopped giving franchises to two-stroke engines on their own.

Nactodap estimated that 7,500 to 10,000 drivers converged on Mendiola yesterday, but police said the actual number was only a tenth of that, anywhere between 750 and 1,000.

But the presence of hundreds of tricycles held up traffic on Recto, Morayta and Legarda avenues and Ramon Magsaysay Boulevard.



THOUSANDS of protesting tricycle drivers are blocked at the Mendiola Bridge leading to Malacañang Palace. ERIK ARAZAS

Lim said his group had talked to government officials before, but nothing had happened.

Gozun, however, said the government was ready to listen to the drivers' concerns even as it was determined to lessen pollution.

Gozun and Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza led government negotiators who talked with Nactodap officials.

At around 3 p.m., the two sides reached an agreement after holding negotiations at an eatery on Mendiola.

Aside from the suspension, the government also agreed to set up an inter-agency committee under the Department of Transportation and Communications, that would include representatives from Nactodap, nongovernment organizations, manufacturers and other government agencies.

The committee will help ensure that tricycle drivers are consulted in the shaping of new government policy affecting their sector.

But Gozun said it was difficult to accommodate the drivers' demand that the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board should be the one to issue tricycle franchises, not the LGUs.

This would require an amendment of the Local Government Code, she said. But she said the administration would support the revision.

The one-month reprieve may have won the day for drivers and operators, but the country of 80 million people has been losing the battle against smog and its ill effects on health.

In November, the World Bank warned that air pollution would cost the Philippines almost $1.5 billion per year in medical treatment, lost wages and low productivity.

A study by the World Bank showed fine particle emissions caused an estimated 2,000 premature deaths and 9,000 cases of chronic bronchitis each year in the nation's four largest cities.

The MMDA order urged the Metro LGUs to "implement a moratorium on the granting of franchise to new two-stroke motorized tricycles starting Jan. 1, 2003 until such time that the DENR came up with hydrocarbon (HC) emissions standards for in-use motorized tricycles."

It also urged them to "come up with a program aimed at reducing emissions from two-stroke motorized tricycles including the phaseout of old two-stroke motorized tricycles."

The MMDA issued the resolution since the Clean Air Act's implementing rules and regulations did not set a limit for HC emission for tricycles.

Metro Manila has around 120,000 two-stroke tricycles, it noted, and these vehicles "generate substantial amounts of air pollutants, primarily HCs, contributing to morbidity and smog that causes haze in Metro Manila." *With a report from Reuters*

22 dead . . .

From page A1

Palestinian Authority reforms demanded by Washington as a condition for statehood.

Israel would also prevent the Palestinian Central Council (PCC) from meeting for the first time in two years on Jan. 9 to ratify a Palestinian constitution, including a clause establishing the post of prime minister.

"To prevent us from going to London means to prevent any attempt to revive the peace process and to break this vicious cycle of violence," said Saeb Erekat, a Palestinian Cabinet minister and peace negotiator.

"To prevent the PCC from convening means to prevent the Palestinian people's representatives from openly debating the constitution of the future Palestinian state," he told Reuters.

The meeting of one of the Palestine Liberation Organization's top bodies was to have been held in the West Bank city of Ramallah. Israeli forces reoccupied Palestinian cities after suicide bombings in June.

Responsibility

The militant al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, an armed offshoot of Arafat's Fatah faction, claimed responsibility for the attacks in statements on Sunday and Monday.

It named the bombers as Boraq Abdel Rahman Halfa and Saber al-Nouri from the West Bank city of Nablus and said they struck Tel Aviv in retaliation for demolitions of Palestinian homes.

But another statement issued in the name of the group late on Sunday denied responsibility after Fatah's main political body said the two men were not on its "membership files" and that it condemned acts such as the Tel Aviv bombing.

The conflicting statements represented apparent divisions in the brigades over whether to carry out suicide bombings, which the Palestinian Authority has repeatedly called detrimental to the cause of statehood.

The blasts, two minutes apart, tore through an area near the old bus station and a crowded mall nearby, leaving bodies strewn about, shops in ruins and people fleeing in panic.

"Happy New Year" read the sign outside Tel Aviv's Station Café, where overturned tables, smashed beer bottles and pieces of flesh littered the sidewalk.

John Adu, 45, from Ghana, cleans houses for a living in Tel Aviv. He was knocked to the ground by the first blast and ran in the wrong direction as the second bomb sent him sprawling.

"I prayed not to die and thought maybe God would save me because I was in the Holy Land," said Adu, who was not hurt.

Bush reaction

US President George W. Bush denounced the Tel Aviv attack.

"He condemns this in the strongest possible terms," White House Spokesperson Claire Buchan said. "There are those who want to derail the peace process. But the president will not be deterred."

Before the attack, the death toll of those killed since the Palestinian uprising started in September 2000 was at least 1,760 Palestinians and 676 Israelis. *Reuters*

OFWs among those hurt in Tel Aviv suicide bombings

From page A1

dence of migrant workers."

Cortazar also said the attack occurred near a neighborhood where many foreign workers lived. He said this was the third attack so far in an area with a heavy concentration of foreign workers.

In Tel Aviv, the Associated Press reported that many foreign workers injured in the attack faced a painful dilemma: suffer with their injuries or go to a hospital for treatment, where authorities might find they have no work visas and deport them.

Reacting to the fears, the Israeli police, the interior ministry and Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issued statements promising the workers that none would be arrested.

Netanyahu also said the government would expedite the arrival of the workers' relatives, even those without proper papers.

Cortazar said in his report that most of the injured Filipinos were treated at the site of the bombing or taken to hospitals and then discharged shortly. Two were confined at the Belinsar Hospital/Rabin Medical Center and another two at the Tel Hashomer hospital, both in Greater Tel Aviv.

Ople said he had spoken with Anota and given instructions that "all steps be taken to assure the safety and well-being" of the wounded OFWs.

"I've also been informed that they are entitled to financial benefits from the Israeli government," he said, adding that the host government had shouldered the costs of medical treatment.

Ople described another of the injured Filipinos as a 34-year-old woman from Apalit, Pampanga, who suffered minor wounds in the left cheek. "She arrived just six months ago in Israel," he said.

Officials of the Department of Labor and Employment refused to name the OFWs pending the notification of their families here.

The families of OFWs in Israel may call these emergency hotlines: 03-6879727 or 03-6879758 for foreign workers; 12-55036666 for the Tel Aviv municipality; and 12550811010 for English-speaking parties.

There are around 35,000 OFWs in Israel, most of them caregivers or house help.

Three Filipino caregivers have died in bombings there since December 2001, and 10 were injured in the past two years.

"We deplore the spate of suicide bombings in retaliation to the Israeli defense forces' military raids in Gaza in the West Bank," Ople said.

But labor information officer Nicon Fameronag said the DOLE was not planning to move the OFWs to a safe place, or even halt the deployment of Filipinos to Israel.

Worry and concern

In Tel Aviv, bodies were lined up at the scenes of the twin blasts, about 100 meters apart. The badly wounded were taken to hospitals.

But of the dozens who suffered less serious wounds, some held back. Others, uninjured, feared to check on their friends, lest police round them up and send them home—a worry to add to natural concern for their safety.

Roundups are no mere theory. Israel's government has targeted illegal workers, sending inspectors to work sites, arresting illegals on the spot and sending them to detention centers to await deportation.

But on Channel 2 TV, an announcer paused in the nightly Hebrew-language newscast to appeal to the workers in English.

"If you or any of your loved ones are hurt in this bomb blast, please don't be afraid to go to one of the Israeli hospitals in Tel Aviv, even if you are working illegally in Israel," she said. "Don't worry, no one will arrest you, no one will try to harm you. Please, just go to the hospital and get treatment."

Israel Radio broadcast similar appeals in several languages.

It reflected the tense cat-and-mouse world that has become a way of life for tens of thousands of foreign workers, many of whom live and gather where the bombers hit on Sunday.

Foreign workers, mainly East European, African, Thai, Chinese and Filipino and most living well below the poverty line, predominate in the targeted neighborhood.

Other workers from Romania, Thailand, China and Ghana make the area of the old, defunct central bus station in Tel Aviv.a polyglot of languages and customs, usually unnoticed by Israelis.

Exact numbers are hard to come by, since illegals shun authorities, but Kav Laoved, an advocacy group for the workers, estimates that 65 percent of the 300,000 foreign workers in Israel are illegal.

With Israel's unemployment rate over 10 percent, the official thought is that the illegals are taking jobs Israelis could fill, even though most of the foreign workers have menial jobs at minuscule wages that Israelis would not even consider.

Many of the workers started out legal, but because of a complicated Israeli system that ties a worker to a single contractor, regardless of work or living conditions, many become illegal simply by switching jobs.

Others overstay their visas, defying the risk of deportation for the possibility of working in Israel for a while longer and sending money home to families.

House to house

Israeli social worker Leonora Bahar said that after the attack, she and her colleagues went house to house in the vicinity to see if residents needed help.

Many of the nervous foreigners refused to open their doors, she said, while others rebuffed her advice to seek medical treatment.

Similarly, she added, friends or relatives of illegal workers killed in attacks were unlikely to come to the morgue.

"They don't come to claim bodies," Bahar said. "Their friends are afraid to come because they're afraid they will be sent back."

"This is craziness," said Ghanaian John Adu. "If I had the money I would go back home. But I don't ... so I will continue cleaning houses here." *Reports from Blanche S. Rivera and Norman Bordadora in Manila; AP and Reuters in Tel Aviv*

KAKAMPI NATIN ANG BATAS!

Mula January 2003, wala nang limit sa implementasyon ng GSIS Retirement Law (RA 8291)

Ano ang AMC?

Ang AMC o Average Monthly Compensation ay ang average na buwanang sweldo ng isang GSIS member sa kanyang last 3 years of service. Ito ang basehan, bukod sa taon ng serbisyo ng isang GSIS member, sa pag-compute ng kanyang Basic Monthly Pension.

Ano ang AMC Limit?

Sa ngayon, ang basehan ng pag-compute ng Basic Monthly Pension ay hanggang ₱16,000.00 lamang. Ang ₱16,000.00 na ito ang tinatawag na AMC Limit. Dito, ang pinakamalaking buwanang pensyon na makukuha ng GSIS member ay 'di tataas sa 90% ng ₱16,000.00, o 'di tataas sa ₱14,400.00 kada buwan.

Samakatuwid, kung ang average monthly compensation ng miyembro ay ₱20,000.00, ₱25,000.00 o higit pa, ang makukuha niyang pensyon ay 'di hihigit sa ₱14,400.00.

Ano ang idinidikta ng RA 8291 tungkol sa AMC Limit Removal?

Ang RA 8291 ay nagdidiktang tanggalin ang AMC Limit na ₱16,000.00!
Ang magiging basehan ng makukuhang pensyon ng GSIS member ay ang kanyang Actual Average Monthly Compensation!

Ano ang epekto ng AMC Limit Removal sa Basic Monthly Pension ng GSIS Members?

Sa mga GSIS Members na may average monthly compensation na mas mababa sa ₱16,000.00, walang epekto ang batas na ito. Pareho pa rin ang kanilang GSIS contribution amount at Basic Monthly Pension na makukuha.

Subalit sa mga miyembrong may average monthly compensation na mas mataas sa ₱16,000.00, dahil ang basehan ng kanilang Basic Monthly Pension ay ang kanilang Actual Average Monthly Compensation na, mas malaki ang makukuha nilang pensyon! At habang tumataas ang kanilang sweldo, tumataas din ang makukuha nilang pensyon!

Ano ang epekto ng AMC Limit Removal sa monthly contributions ng mga miyembrong masasakupan ng RA 8291?

Sa pagtanggal ng AMC Limit, tataas nang bahagya ang personal contribution ng mga miyembrong tumatanggap ng higit sa ₱16,000.00 dahil ang kanilang kontribusyon ay base na sa kanilang aktwal na buwanang sweldo at hindi na sa AMC Limit na ₱16,000.00.

Bagama't tataas ang GSIS contribution ng mga apektadong miyembro dahil sa AMC Limit Removal, ating tandaan na ang karagdagang halagang ito ay mangangahulugang mas malaking pensyon na magbibigay ng kinabukasang mas maginhawa sa mga GSIS members at sa kanilang pamilya .

Ito y pag-iimpok o pamumuhunan ng mas malaki, para sa mas malalaking benepisyo t seguridad.

Ano ang Kinabukasan ng GSIS Members at ng Kanyang Pamilya sa AMC Limit Removal under RA 8291?

Pagdating ng araw na ang GSIS member ay hindi na makapagtrabaho, matutustusan pa rin niya ang kanyang sariling pangangailangan pati na rin ng kanyang mga mahal sa buhay nang walang kahirap-hirap! Maaari pa siyang makatanggap ng buwanang pensyon na **MAS MATAAS PA** kaysa sa kanyang buwanang sweldo noong siya y nagsisilbi pa sa gobyerno!

Sa hinaharap, mahirap nang pagkasyahin ang ₱14,400.00 buwan-buwan sa araw-araw na pangangailangan ng isang pamilya. Sa pamamagitan ng pagtanggal ng AMC Limit under RA 8291, mas malaking 'di-hamak ang matatanggap ng miyembro buwan-buwan mula sa GSIS! Mas malaking ginhawa!

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SPORTS

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Frenchman wins Dakar's Africa stage

TUNIS—France's Stephane Peterhansel consolidated his early lead in the Dakar rally by winning the grueling 8,500-kilometer (5,300-mile) race's first African stage Sunday. Peterhansel, driving a Mitsubishi, clocked 18 minutes, 26 seconds over a 25-kilometer (15-mile) special stage between Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, and the North African's nation's oasis town of Tozeur. AP

NO CHEMISTRY

Gerry quits; Salud has new project

By Al S. Mendoza
Sports Editor

SAYING he was happy he came out of it in one piece, Gerry Peñalosa announced yesterday his retirement from boxing.

At the same time, Rudy Salud, Peñalosa's manager, said he will set up a new "boxing project" that will tap Gerry's boxing skills in hopes of finding "a new world champion."

The 31-year-old Peñalosa, who lost his crown in 1997, sent his letter of retirement yesterday to Eduardo R. Villanueva, chair of the Games and Amusements Board.

In his letter, Peñalosa said he was also "relinquishing my WBC International and North American Boxing Federation (NABF) super flyweight titles."

The one-time World Boxing Council's superflyweight champion said his partnership with Rudy Salud "lacked the chemistry" to make him world champion again.

Peñalosa, seated beside his wife Goody during the press conference at the Bayview Plaza Hotel, said he was retiring with a "heavy heart because I failed to realize my Christmas wish to win back the title."

Said Peñalosa: "Attorney Salud is right. *Wala kaming kemistri. Ginawa na naming lahat at grabe talaga ang sakripisyo niya sa akin.* The two of us really love boxing but boxing does not seem to love us."

But Peñalosa admitted he was happy with his decision to "hang up my gloves because I'm retiring in one piece and my family will definitely be very happy with this."

Under Salud's stewardship that began in 1998, Peñalosa won 7 times but lost the 3 fights that mattered most as all 3 were for the world crown—one against Korean In Joo Cho and twice against Japan-born North Korean Masamori Tokuyama.

Split decision

Peñalosa's third failed attempt happened last Dec. 20 in Osaka, Japan, when Tokuyama escaped with a split decision win to reprise a similar points victory over Gerry in 2001 in Yokohama, Japan.

Said Goody: *"Malungkot na masaya. Pero mas masaya ako.* I'll miss the pressure and the tension when Gerry is fighting but in the end, it's the happiness of seeing him quit while he is still strong and healthy. *Masaya ako na walang nagyari sa kanya."*

Chito Salud, Salud's lawyer-son who acted as Peñalosa's business manager, said he was happy to have worked with Peñalosa because:

Filipino goodwill

"First, Gerry always gave it his best shot and although we lost the three most important fights in our team-up, I'm happy that health-wise, he did not suffer a major damage. And second, the Filipino goodwill that came out of our partnership was evident when we were abroad fighting. The setbacks hurt, but what compensated for those was the respect we earned from the world's practitioners of the sport."

The elder Salud said Gerry and Goody will start a fish business in General Santos City, Goody's hometown, which is famous for its world-class yellow fin tuna.

"But aside from their fish business," said Rudy Salud, "Gerry will help me look for boxers with the potential to become world champions."

Said Salud: "I will support them all the way. But Gerry's retirement will not mean we are abandoning boxing altogether. He will scout for talents in Negros, Cebu and Mindanao. At the moment, Tony Aldeguer of Cebu has graciously offered us his four pros and one amateur. If Gerry feels they have the potential, I will take them in and send them to the United States for a 30-day training."

Salud said he would send potential world-beaters to Freddie Roach, the famous American boxing trainer, "for a look-over."

The former PBA commissioner said the boxing project with Peñalosa would also include a sports psychologist and a nutritionist.

"We will do it the scientific way like what the rest of the world is doing right now," said Salud.

In his letter to Villanueva, Peñalosa said: "I hope to continue my involvement in boxing and thereby help Atty. Salud in his continuing and passionate quest to develop world champions for the honor and glory of our country."

SALUD (right) with Peñalosa during yesterday's press conference at the Bayview Plaza Hotel. ERIC ARAZAS

Ucap int'l derby today

CHAMPION breeders from America and cockfight heavyweights in the national circuit clash today as the Ucap International 9- Cock Derby gets going at Mandaluyong Coliseum. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds, PAGCOR–Casino Filipino, Heritage Hotel and Washout Shampoo.

To be hosted by OPMI president Vic Yu and supported by the United Cockers Association of the Philippines (Ucap), the three-day cockfest (Jan. 7, 9 and 11) is Mandaluyong Coliseum's grand opener for 2003. Derby starts at 5 p.m. bannering some 65 fights.

Heading the elite list of the American team are Kelly Green of Alabama, reigning 2002 Texoma 11–Cock Derby Champion, Chuck Berry of Oklahoma, champion of 2000 UCAP International Derby, Bobby Jones of Texas, Jimmy Cody of Alabama, Howard Belk of California, Fil-Ams George Goitia, Rene Medina and Boy de Guzman of California.

Not to be outdone are the entries of Ucap president Raymond Velayo, LGBA champion Mauro Prieto, Biboy Enriquez, Mario Villamor, Alan Tan, Mayor Berto Uy, Blandy Tolentino, Alex Tang, Edgar Santos, Roel Ricafort, Benjie Lim, Romero Yu, Bobby del Rosario, Bobby Wong, Boy Diaz, Ricky Castillo Bobby Doromal, Carding Dapat, Emil Chua, Eric dela Rosa and Gov. Ito Ynares.

For other inquiries, please call tels. 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

PBA CAMP

Trinidad to PBL players: Make your decision

GAMES THURSDAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—ICTSI-La Salle vs Cheeseballs-Shark
5 p.m.—Montaña Pawnshop vs John O

By Dennis U. Eroa

"PLAYERS must decide whether or not they will join the PBA Camp."

Thus said PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad yesterday as he maintained his hard line position on disagreeing with the PBA's decision to require PBA applicants to join the PBA Camp on Jan. 10.

Trinidad said it was too late for his office to change the league schedule so as to allow PBL players to join the affair.

"Never would the PBL prevent its players from pursuing their pro career. But I feel that the PBA Camp will disrupt our schedule. Players can go if they want," Trinidad said.

The PBA formally sent its invitation yesterday to Trinidad's office located at the Makati Coliseum.

The Camp on Jan. 10 is set at the SM Megamall. The PBL has an out-of-town game featuring Welcoat and Dazz in Lucena City on Jan. 11.

Eddie Laure and Rommel Adducul, who are expected to emerge as first round draft choices, play for Welcoat. Other players affected by the PBA Camp are Ronald Tubid and Cyrus Baguio.

Also set to play in Lucena City on Jan. 11 are ICTSI and Sunkist-Pampanga.

Trinidad said that Lucena-bound teams are leaving a day early—Jan. 10.

In his letter, Commissioner Noli Eala assured Trinidad that the "PBA shall respect any prior commitments which the PBL players have in the enforcement of league policy with respect to the Camp."

Eala also reassured the PBL that, like in the past, it will not disrupt the remaining calendar in its season.

Trinidad said he is hopeful that the PBA will not give sanction to players who fail to join the Camp. He noted that the Welcoat management is thinking of allowing Laure and company to make the Camp. Welcoat is already assured of the twice-to-beat advantage in the semifinals.

Over at the Pasig Sports Center, Cheeseballs-Shark dumped John O, 85-65, for its third win against eight losses.

In the second game, Welcoat upped its record to 9-1 after edging Blu, 63-60. Blu dropped to 7-4.

John O, which dropped to 4-7, committted 30 turnovers, which were translated into 27 points by the Cheeseballs.

Shooter Stephen Padilla led Shark with 19 points but it was the playmaking skills of Topex Robinson that allowed coach Philip Cezar's charges to erect a double-digit advantage in the second half.

Scores:

CHEESEBALLS 85--Padilla 19, Basilides 12, Sanz 10, Junio 9, Castro 8, Epondulan 7, Valdez 6, Ortega 4, Robinson 3, Magsumbol 3, Omolon 2, Ybañez 2, Abadia 0.

JOHN O 65--De Ocampo 20, Calimag 12, Cruz 7, Cayabyab 6, Napa 5, Lapinid 5, Olaguer 5, Rivera 4, Vergara 1, Bat-og 0, Salvador 0, Neo 0, Soriano 0.

Songcuya, Pascua earn chess slots

EMMANUEL Eumer Songcuya II downed erstwhile co-leader John Robin Buenavista in 55 moves of a Sicilian variation to rule the Under 12 group during the last round to select members of the 2003 US-bound Milo Checkmate team at Greenhills Shopping Center.

With the victory, Songcuya II of La Salle Greenhills, who was held to a 40-move draw by Aices Salvador of Manila, gained the first of nine contested final slots on the team bound to World Open Chess Championships in July in Philadelphia.

Haridas Pascua of Mangatarem, Pangasinan, drew his final match against Antonio Seloterio of San Jose del Monte and topped the Under 10 bracket with 6.5 points after seven rounds to assure himself of one of the remaining four slots.

Salvador grabbed the second final berth following her victory over JC Marquez in 32 moves of a Caro-Kahn while Buenavista, who was earlier upset by Joshua Kirk Ver, finished third to earn the next slot.

Sean Bancod and Rommelle delos Santos who shared the top honors in the junior division secured two of the remaining six final berths after Marlon Alzona and Dexter Dacanay begged off in the last final round due to health reasons.

Karl Vicente who was held to a draw by MJ Turqueza in 34 moves of an English placed second to grab a slot to the team while Emmanuel Elijah Songcuya III bounced back with three successive wins to earn one of the remaining seats.

Exorcising Eala

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

CHINO Trinidad has a point there. The PBL players are not yet properties of the PBA. So why sanction them at all if they fail to appear in the PBA Camp on Jan. 10?

It's like telling your would-be brother-in-law to kiss your parents' hands (*mano po*) when your sister has yet to exchange "I dos" with him.

The PBA Camp is just that–a camp with which to provide both the public and PBA functionaries a glimpse of what's in store for every basketball-crazed Pinoy when the PBA Draft comes on Jan. 12. Nothing more. It's but a decoration. It is, for all intents and purposes, but a parade of candidates. It could be that not all candidates would be there for one reason or another and that'd be just fine. The real Judgment Day is on PBA Draft day itself. You are absent that day and that's it, you miss your chance to board the PBA bus to greatness.

But the PBA Camp?

Because of its very nature–a mere side show to the main show (PBA Draft)–one's presence to it shouldn't be mandatory. If all the applicants should all be present, that should be treated as a bonus.

Although it is listed as an official PBA undertaking, it does not give the league the license to impose penalties on players wanting to join the PBA should they fail to appear. That'd be dictatorial. Marcosian. That'd be like putting the horse before the carriage.

Or is newly appointed PBA Commissioner Noli Eala starting things on the wrong foot?

When will a non-PBA player become a PBA property? When he applies for the PBA Draft or when he has signed up for a PBA team?

Unfortunately, there is no PBA law covering that issue. If the law is silent, do not add.

I wonder where Noli Eala got his rule sanctioning PBA applicants if they don't show up in the PBA Camp.

Will someone appearing in the PBA Camp make him a PBA property outright?

The answer is no.

I'm not saying applicants should boycott it or make it intentional not to join the PBA Camp. What I'm saying is, if an applicant can't make it for obvious reasons, why impose sanctions at all? Has Eala started thinking of himself as God already even if he has hardly warmed up his new chair?

Remember, we are not talking here of a PBA player. What we are dealing with here are prospective PBA players. PBL boss Chino Trinidad is right: Technically speaking, we don't have control as yet over the PBA applicants.

Even the PBA Draft, if I may remind Commissioner Eala about it, does not guarantee a drafted player to be a PBA player outright. For, a drafted player can only be considered a PBA player once he seals a contract with the team of his choice. Stretching the issue further, if we want to be ultra-technical about it, a PBA player cannot be categorically considered a PBA property if he hasn't played at all in an official PBA game on an official PBA game day.

So Noli my dear, what's the fuss all about?

C'mon Noli, don't spoil your first official act. If power-driven demons have started to bedevil you, let your friends do the exorcising. I told you, you need the likes of a Ben Evardone in your staff. Possessed with the skill of a chess grandmaster, Ben can get you out of a fix–even with one eye closed.

Trust me. For starters, Ben's brother, Philip, is my *kumpadre.* I know them from head to foot.

■

Here's another wish for 2003:

- Anthony de Leon winning more plaudits for his no-nonsense style of running the show at the Baguio Country Club as general manager. The club has not stopped garnering praises since Anthony took over the reins at the BCC.

On another plane, what's this I hear that Mayor Jolly Resuello of San Carlos City (Pangasinan) has threatened to kill Orly Navarro, one of Dagupan City's hardest hitting broadcasters? Unbelievable. I know that Jolly is a tough act to follow insofar as running a city's affairs is concerned. But Jolly being a toughie as to go to the extent of trying to harm a journalist?

Unthinkable. Will the good mayor please give me a ring and clarify matters?

Iloilo hosting richest cockfest

THE RICHEST derby in the South takes center stage from Jan. 29 to Feb. 2 when the 36th Annual Candelaria 7-Cock Derby is held at the Iloilo Coliseum in Jaro, Iloilo City.

With Enertone ready-mixed maintenance feeds as major sponsor, a record P5 million in guaranteed cash prize is at stake with the entry fee set at P39,000.

Held each year in celebration of the feast day of Nuestra Señora de Candelaria, the event is hosted by the Iloilo Sportsmen Inc., with veteran and respected derby promoter Chito Tinsay as president and general manager.

For inquiries, call Iloilo Coliseum at (033) 320-7239 or (033) 320-7240 and look for Edna Uy.

I'm here when they need me, says Jordan

WASHINGTON—Michael Jordan wasn't about to sit down. He played the entire fourth quarter. All of the first overtime. All of the second overtime. He scored the points that put his team ahead for good.

By the time he was done, the 39-year-old Jordan had played 53 of a possible 58 minutes and added one more mini-classic to his highlight vaults. His season-high 41 points in Saturday night's 107-104 victory over the Indiana Pacers gave the Washington Wizards a badly needed win over a team that has dominated them for five years.

There were times this season when it seemed Jordan didn't have that commandeering game left in him, the one where he scores and scores again and wills his team to victory no matter what. He has frequently — and willingly — played second banana to Jerry Stackhouse on many nights.

But not Saturday night.

"I'm here when they need me," Jordan said. "There are situations when Jerry is going to carry us, and maybe even when some of the other guys are. But tonight it was my turn."

After the accolades were dished out, there was one obvious question for Jordan: How did the body hold up? After all, the original game plan this season called for him to play not much more than 30 minutes per game, a precautionary strategy stemming from the worn-down knees that cost him 22 games last season. *AP*

Red-hot Blazers spank Knicks

NEW YORK—Bonzi Wells scored 22 points as the Portland Trail Blazers won for the 10th time in 11 games, with a 92-89 over the New York Knick in the NBA on Sunday.

Portland finished µp its five-game road trip with a record of 4-1 and an overall record of 20-12, leaving the red-hot Trail Blazers just 3 1/2 games out of first place in the Pacific Division behind first-place Sacramento.

Rasheed Wallace scored 18 points and added 12 rebounds for Portland, while Antonio Daniels added 15 points.

The Knicks had one last chance to win in the dying seconds, while trailing by three-points. But Allen Houston inexplicably attempted a two-point basket with three seconds left and missed.

Houston did have 29 points for the Knicks, while Latrell Sprewell added 16 points for New York, which saw its three-game winning streak snapped.

Lakers 109, Suns 97

In Los Angeles, Shaquille O'Neal scored 36 points and added 16 rebounds while Kobe Bryant added 31 points and 12 rebounds to lead the Los Angeles Lakers past the Phoenix Suns 109-97.

The Lakers improved to 14-20 with the win and moved above the Golden State Warriors into fifth place in the Pacific Division.

Stephon Marbury had 32 points for the Suns, while Shawn Marion added 13 points and Joe Johnson 12 for Phoenix (21-13).

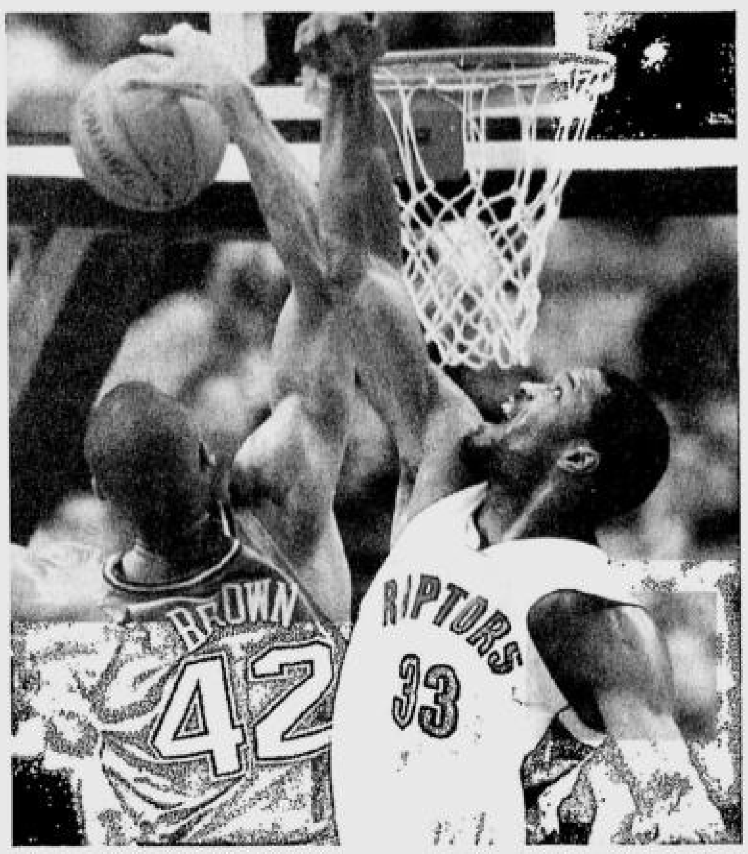
Hornets 99, Raptors 84

In Toronto, Jamal Mashburn had 22 points and David Wesley added 20 as the New Orleans Hornets handed the Toronto Raptors their 10th straight defeat with a 99-84 victory.

P.J. Brown had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Hornets, while Toronto native Jaamal Magloire added 11 points and eight rebounds.

COMPLETE RESULTS

New Orleans 99, Toronto 84; San Antonio 94, LA Clippers 86; Portland 92, New York 89; Sacramento 96, Miami 70; LA Lakers 109, Phoenix 97. *Reuters*



TORONTO Raptors' center Antonio Davis (right) tries to block a shot by New Orleans Hornets' forward P.J. Brown. The Raptors 99-84 loss to the Hornets extended their losing streak to 10 games. AFP

SPORTSTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Toronto vs Detroit, 8:30 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), Solar Sports

TENNIS: ATP Tata Open, 7 a.m. (r), Star Sports

GOLF: Best of PGA Golf - Short Game Masters, 8:30 p.m., Star Sports

Mastercard Masters Golf, 9 p.m. (r), Star Sports

BOWLING: CGU Asian Bowling Tour, 1 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. (r), ESPN

USA vs Europe Tenpin Bowling 2002, 2 p.m., ESPN

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Blast, 10:30 a.m., ESPN

POOL: World Pool League 2002, 11 a.m. (r), ESPN

Rack 'Em Up 2, 12 noon (r), Solar Sports

Paradorn whips Slovak rival, tops India netfest

PARADORN

MADRAS, India—Thailand's Paradorn Srichaphan made a perfect start to the year by winning the Indian Open tennis tournament on Sunday, beating Slovakia's Karol Kucera 6-3, 6-1.

The 23-year-old from Bangkok, ranked 16th in the world, did not drop a set in the $400,000 tournament to capture his third title in less than five months.

Paradorn, named "Thai of the Year" ahead of several pop stars and politicians by a survey in his country last month, took his maiden ATP title in Long Island last August and then won at Stockholm in October.

The second seed needed just 69 minutes to see off Kucera, a former world number six who is looking to get back to his best this season. The Slovak is currently 83rd in the world.

Paradorn, who jumped 110 places in the world ranking last season, had lost to Argentine Guillermo Canas in the final here last year.

"I started last year very well by making the final here," the Thai said after pocketing the $54,000 winner's purse. "This year, I've started even better by winning. Maybe it's some sort of a sign."

Paradorn, coached by his father Chanachai Srichaphan, recorded wins over many top-10 players last year including current world number one Lleyton Hewitt of Australia.

"I didn't expect to do this well in the tournament. I just thought I'll come and play my game but I didn't even lose a set.

It's really great, especially since it's my first title in Asia."

Paradorn survived two break points in the fourth game of the first set as Kucera took the early initiative with some well-measured pushes from the baseline.

But the Thai took control after that, coming up with some booming serves and putting pressure on Kucera's serve by chipping and charging.

Paradorn broke in the seventh game and again in the ninth to close out the first set. He then powered through the second, closing out the match with a backhand down-the-line winner.

"Last time when I played this final, I was a little nervous because it was my first," Paradorn said. "Now I've already played in five finals, and so I went out there totally relaxed. *Reuters*

Martina blasts Aussie Open

MELBOURNE—Tennis great Martina Navratilova has attacked the timing of the Australian Open, saying the first grand slam of the year should be moved back a month to February.

The former world number one said it was dangerous to play the tournament in January because of the heat while most of the players were still below peak fitness after their winter holidays in Europe and North America.

"It could take someone dying before things will change, but I firmly believe the Australian Open should be put back a month until at least February," Navratilova wrote in The Australian.

"I think if they moved it a month it would be great for tennis and especially for the players." Navratilova won the Australian Open three times but refused to play again after 1989 when it moved from the grasscourts of Kooyong to the Rebound Ace at Melbourne Park even though she continued her career for another five years.

"I would have loved to have kept playing here (but) it's too hot in January," the 46-year-old said.

"We've had people on IV treatment after matches recovering from extreme heat exhaustion.

"When you're playing a match and all you can think of is how to stay cool, trying to find any shade on court, that is no good for anybody."

Navratilova said last year's final between Martina Hingis and Jennifer Capriati, when both players were in obvious distress after the temperature rose to 35 degrees Celsius, was proof the tournament needed to be moved to a later date. *Reuters*

49ers, Steelers advance in NFL

SAN FRANCISCO—San Francisco and Pittsburgh pulled off thrilling come-from-behind victories Sunday to advance in the National Football League playoffs.

Quarterback Jeff Garcia piloted the 49ers to the second-biggest comeback in playoff history, accounting for 391 yards and four touchdowns as San Francisco erased a 24-point second-half deficit to beat the New York Giants 39-38 in an NFC wild card game.

Garcia capped the comeback and a 17-point fourth quarter for the Niners with a 13-yard scoring pass to Tai Streets with one minute left.

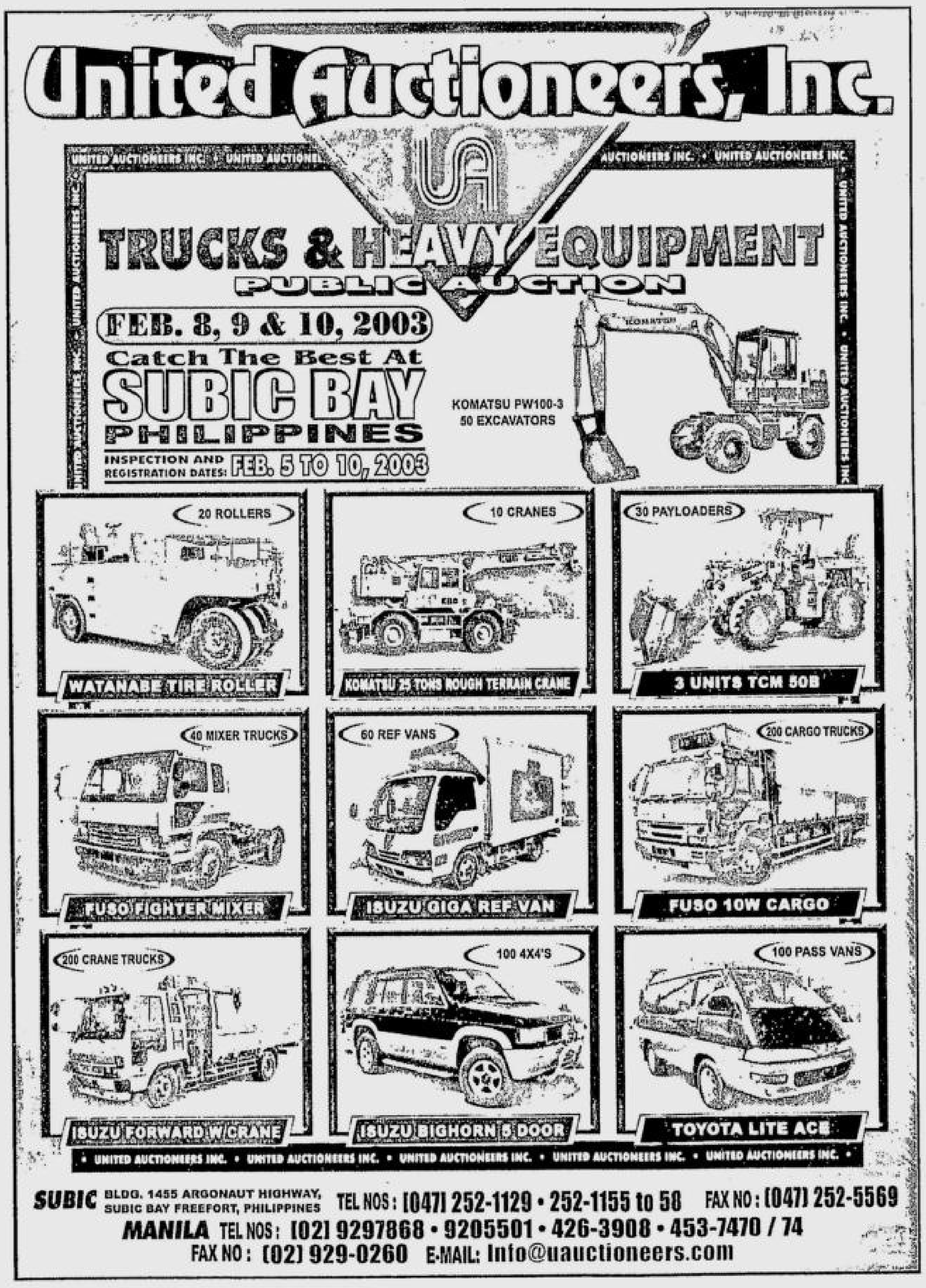
A day of drama started hours earlier in Pittsburgh, where the NFL's Comeback Player of the Year staged the Steelers' greatest post-season rally.

Tommy Maddox passed for 367 yards and three second-half touchdowns as the Steelers fought back from a 12-point deficit in the final three and a half minutes and posted a 36-33 victory over Cleveland in a wild card game matching the AFC's oldest rivals.

Fullback Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala scored on a three-yard run with 54 seconds left for the winning touchdown. *AFP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1991, Francesca La'O beat Joanna Feria, 4-6, 6-2, 6-2, to bag the girls' 18-and-under plum of the Salvador Andrada Cup age-group tennis championship at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Also today in 1991, Rikki DyLiacco clocked 56.95 seconds to rule the final leg of the RACE Motorsports Club year-round slalom series at the JRC Kartway.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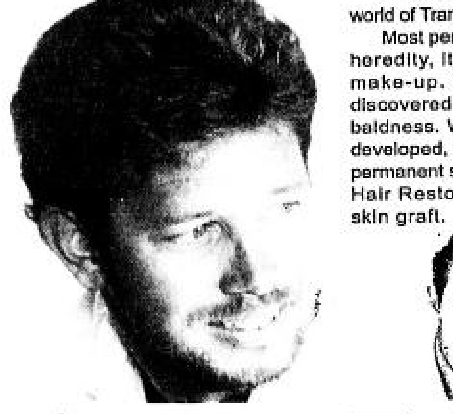

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RP Int'l golf on at W'Wack

THE SIXTH Samsung Philippine International Junior Championships gets going today at Wack Wack with a total of 80 players from six countries seeing action..

Edgardo "Boy" Cantada, president of the Philippine Junior Golf Federation, launched the golfest in 1998 to discover talents from the region.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo drove the ceremonial ball yesterday to launch the four-day tournament with Samsung as title sponsor.

Comelec chair Ben Abalos led the guests and well-wishers during yesterday's opening ceremony.

Cebu Pacific, Wilson Sports, Morelia Tours, Herma Group of Companies, Pagcor, Mitsubishi Motors, Bing Bonanza, Toyota Otis, Pisanti Golf, Philippine Flour Mills, Rizal Rep. Gilberto Duavit, Takanobu Taira, Airlift Asia Inc., Raul Jorge, Sysu International, Absolute Distilled Water, Gatorade and Edsa Shangri-La are the other backers.

The Philippines is fielding 40 players from Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. Also competing are golfers from China (Hong Kong), Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea.

Leading the international field is the Philippines' JR Tanpinco, who will celebrate his final year as a junior by defending his overall 21 and under title.

"On behalf of the federation, I would like to welcome all the participants, their parents, the team officials as well as all our sponsors," Cantada said yesterday.

"I would also like to express our gratitude to Mike Arroyo and Ben Abalos for gracing the opening of our unique tournament as special guests. We call it unique because we do not charge any entry fees and we provide complimentary meals all day for the duration of the tournament to create a very festive mood."

TANPINCO

BAP names Boyzie, Dong ass't coaches

By Roy Luarca

FOR coaches Boyzie Zamar and Dong Vergeire, the national team's interest is paramount. Though both have steered the Philippine men's team to success in the past, they readily agreed to be Aric del Rosario's assistants this year.

The Basketball Association of the Philippines, through secretary general Graham Lim, bared their appointment yesterday as the BAP begins its preparations for the 2003 Southeast Asia Basketball Association, Asian Basketball Confederation and Southeast Asian Games men's championships.

Zamar piloted the Philippines, then powered by stars of the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association, to the 4th SEABA title and the 2001 Kuala Lumpur SEAG crown. He also guided the UE Warriors to the top of the Bantay Bata Invitationals and the Battle of Champions.

Vergeire, on the other hand, masterminded the Philippines' title-quest in the 1997 Jakarta SEAG championships. He also gave the College of St. Benilde Blazers the 2001 NCAA crown.

Apart from Zamar and Vergeire, the BAP has given Del Rosario, best remembered for handing the UST Tigers a four-peat in the UAAP and the disbanded Pampanga Dragons the inaugural MBA championship, the liberty to choose two other deputies.

BAP president Tiny Literal and chair Rep. Antonio M. Abaya wanted the coaching staff named early so that the Philippines will be ready to defend its SEABA men's title in Manila in April and its SEAG crown in Vietnam in December. The top two teams in the SEABA meet will qualify to the 22nd ABC Men's Championship slated in China in September.

Lim said some top corporations have offered to help the BAP in maintaining an 18-man national pool, which will be on call for the calendared events and other international competitions.

Aware that most of the land's collegiate stalwarts and the MBA superstars will be joining the PBA draft on Jan. 12, Lim said the BAP will be writing PBA commissioner Noli Eala soon to request that drafted players be made available for this year's national teams.

Cycling course set Jan. 19-26

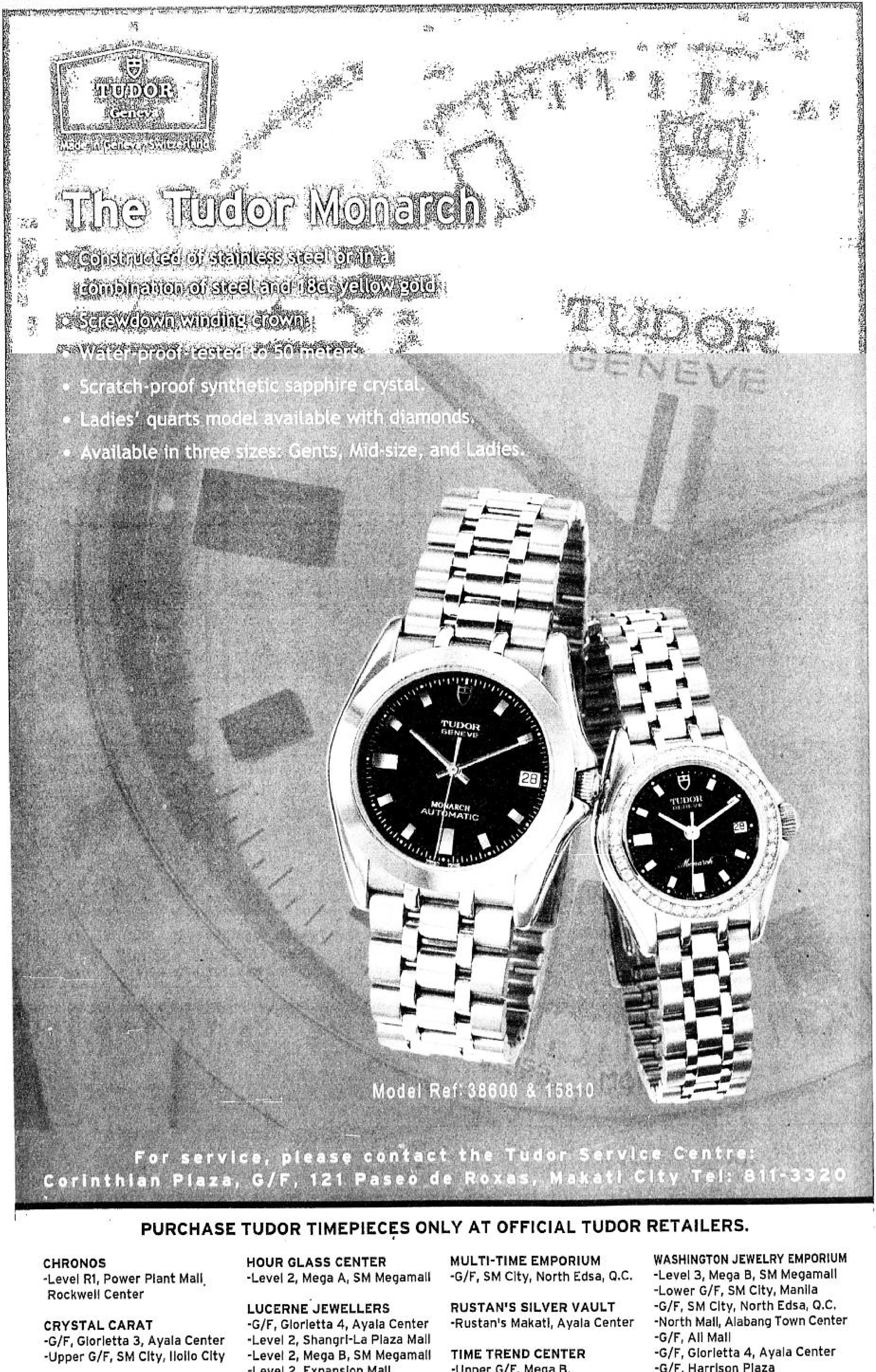
THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee will conduct a Level 2 cycling coaching course in collaboration with the Olympic Solidarity and Union Cycliste International (UCI) on Jan. 19-26 at the Imperial Palace Suites at the corner of T. Morato and Timog Avenues.

UCI expert Craig Griffin will be the course conductor. He will cover various topics such as the coaches' role, talent identification, biomechanics, medical monitoring, pyschological preparation, recovery, diet, women cyclists, road and track events, cyclo-cross and MTB cross country racing.

There will be 26 hours of theoretical sessions and 21 hours of actual application during the course.

Upon completion of the required tests, participants will be awarded Olympic Solidarity and UCI certificates.

Participation is free, but it is limited. For more information, interested parties may contact Boying Santos-Viola at the POC Secretariat, tel. nos. 834-2432 and 834-2436.



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FERNANDO'S REPLACEMENT IN MMDA

Palace choices down to Bunye, Malonzo

By Leila Salaverria, Tina Santos and Christian Esguerra

CALOOCAN City Mayor Rey Malonzo may be up against Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in the runup for the top post of the Metro Manila Development Authority, according to a Caloocan City Hall insider.

But if the sidewalk vendors were to have their way, they would rather have either Lito Atienza of Manila or Benhur Abalos of Mandaluyong to head the MMDA when incumbent chair Bayani Fernando decides to step down and assume the Public Works portfolio.

The Caloocan City Hall source claimed President Macapagal-Arroyo has trimmed down her choices to Bunye and Malonzo.

When asked to comment, Caloocan Public Information Officer Susan De Leon said Malonzo has decided to keep mum on the issue, preferring to concentrate on the coming elections where he intends to run as congressman.

But according to political analysts, Bunye enjoys a bigger edge over Malonzo who has been hounded by controversies from the very start.

Bunye is the former mayor of Muntinlupa City and chairman of the then Metro Manila Authority, precursor of the MMDA.

"Bunye is more qualified to head the sensitive post," said a local official who refused to be named.

In a radio interview, Bunye also refused to comment, saying he would just let the President decide on the matter.

On the part of the vendors, they said they are open to the possibility of having either Atienza or Abalos as MMDA chair

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Witnesses' lives are in danger, claims Cervantes family

By Christian Esguerra

THE LAWYER representing the family of the slain Baron Cervantes has floated two theories to explain why the high-profile fugitive Supt. Rafael Cardeño has refused to surrender.

According to Atty. Leonard De Vera, Cardeño is waiting for the three arrested suspects to get killed or recant their statements tagging him as the brains behind Cervantes' murder.

"He's just buying time and waiting for the right moment to surface," De Vera told the INQUIRER.

With eight days to go before the trial, De Vera said Cardeño might just get his second wish.

"The suspects have virtually recanted their statements when they pleaded not guilty during the arraignment," he said.

Confessed gunman Joseph Mostrales, Erlindo Torres, and Jaime Centeno had earlier admitted in affidavits that Cardeno had ordered them to liquidate Cervantes.

But members of the family of the slain government informant fear that the three suspects may be killed, just like what happened to three of their alleged companions, according to De Vera.

Rodolfo Patinio, Eugene Radam, and Diosdado Santos were supposedly killed in a shootout with police in Cavite last September.

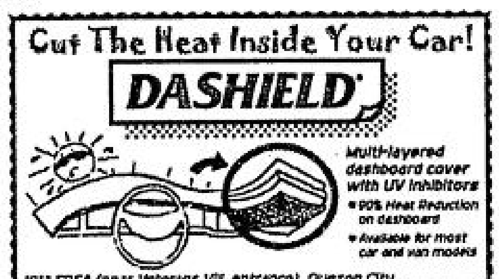
An independent autopsy conducted by a University of the Philippines forensic expert later showed that Santos could have been summarily executed.

"If Mostrales, Centeno and Torres are also killed, we won't have a case against Cardeño anymore," De Vera noted.

The three are detained at the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) team's headquarters at Camp Crame.

Cardeno's lawyer Homobono Adaza had assured Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto that his client would surrender by next week.

Maganto had been tapped by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo to head a task force that would hunt down Cardeño.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There's a lack of presidential timber

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

IS IT constitutional for Tabako to run again? The nation is disunited.

Some say it's unconstitutional for the former president to run again for a second, albeit "broken," term. Others say the Constitution is silent on the matter and therefore he can run again.

There's a reason why many people would want Ramos as a presidential candidate in 2004. There's a dearth of "good" candidates.

* * *

Former senator and education secretary Raul Roco? He's arrogant, he's swellheaded, and a hypocrite.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson? You've got to be kidding! You want the country to be converted into a killing field?

Sen. Noli de Castro? You want another Erap who can't speak straight English?

Sen. Edgardo Angara? You want a guy who just stood by while Erap and his cronies were robbing the country blind because he didn't want to be kicked out of Erap's Cabinet?

* * *

I have no love lost for Ramos, but he's more qualified than all the above presidential aspirants.

Under Ramos, our currency was strong against the US dollar, foreign investors kept coming. But whatever gains Ramos made, Erap lost.

The only thing that militates against Ramos is his advanced age. *Matanda na siya.*

* * *

Now that President Macapagal-Arroyo is no longer running in 2004, she should do something drastic about the booming population.

A couple of years from now, the country's population will hit the 100-million mark if the government doesn't do anything to hold it in check.

The President can cast aside the prodding of the local Catholic Church to leave the booming population as is.

* * *

Besides, even if she were still running in 2004, the veiled threat by the Church that she wouldn't win in the election without its support is just that—a threat.

There is no such thing as a Catholic vote. Catholics in this country have a mind of their own.

As for the threat of eternal damnation, it's only God who can do that, not the Church, which is run by fallible human beings like you and me.

* * *

Instead of blocking government efforts to check the growing population, the Church should go after priests who sire illegitimate children. Illegitimate in the eyes of the law, that is.

(For there are no illegitimate children, only illegitimate parents).

Before the Church teaches morality, it should first take a hard look at the immorality of some members of the clergy.

* * *

If the population is not held in check, the country will be bursting at the seams. There will not be enough space and food for 100 million people in such a small country.

Because of the excess population, people will be murdering one another en masse, stealing from one another in great numbers, and violating other people's rights in the most unimaginable way from the point of view of the present.

But the Church—or other churches in this country for that matter—won't give a hoot about the crush of population because by then its membership shall have also increased by leaps and bounds. And that means more money for the Church tills. *Mas marami ang magpapabinyag, magpapakasal at magbibigay ng pera sa simbahan.*

* * *

A lot of people were surprised at the appointment of Simeon Datumanong as justice secretary. They said he is not a legal luminary.

But Datumanong, a former congressman of Maguindanao, who was secretary of public works before his recent appointment, was 12th place in the bar examinations in 1959. He didn't get to be No. 12 in the country's most highly competitive examination if he didn't have the brains.

Datumanong will bring to the Department of Justice a clean image. I heard from his subordinates at the Department of Public Works and Highways he was on the level and transparent.

* * *

Datumanong's first order of business should be to order an investigation into the reported irregularities committed by Director Ricardo Macala of the Bureau of Corrections at the National Bilibid Prisons.

Macala was untouchable during the tenure of his fellow Batangueño, Hernando Perez, as justice secretary. The DOJ has supervision over the corrections bureau.

I learned from my sources at the NBP that Macala nearly had a heart attack when word reached him that Perez's resignation was accepted by the President.

With Perez gone, nobody would shield Macala from accusations of wrongdoings.

* * *

Retrouvaille, a Catholic apostolate that offers a healing program for deeply troubled and hurting marriages, is holding a weekend retreat on Jan. 10 to 12 at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Barangay San Jose in Tagaytay City.

Couples who want more information on the program or who wish to register for the Jan. 10 weekend may call Fr. David Clay at 523-3361 or (cellphone) 0918-902-0511; Tom and Ruby del Castillo at 931-84-13, 932-3750 or 0918-923-2973; or Flor Carlos at 718-06-89.

Rubout not shootout, victims' kin claim

By Alcuin Papa

CENTRAL Police District officials yesterday maintained that the incident involving the police and two suspected holdup men in Quezon City last Saturday was a shootout.

But relatives of suspects Dante Galoso, 31, of Sta. Mesa, Manila, and Reynaldo Maranan, 30, of Barangay Pasong Tamo, Quezon City, on Sunday accused the policemen of executing the two men.

Chief Insp. Rodolfo Jaraza, chief of the CPD District Police Intelligence Unit, denied the suspects were rubbed out.

"Of course, the suspects' relatives and friends would say that," Jaraza told reporters yesterday. "The truth is, we would rather have them alive. But (the suspects) were the ones who fired first, so we were forced to return fire."

Jaraza said that the two suspects, and their arrested cohort Elizalde Cadinio, 32, of Barangay Culiat, Tandang Sora, Quezon City, were positively identified by one of their supposed victims.

Galoso was killed while Cadinio was seriously injured when they exchanged shots with Jaraza's men at around 9:30 p.m. on Saturday at the corner of Road 1 and Visayas Avenue in Project 6, Quezon City.

Jaraza said they got a report that a group of robbers had been going around in a jeepney picking up passengers. The suspects would then take the jeepney to a dark area where they would rob the passengers.

On Sunday night, Jaraza's informant pointed to a passenger jeepney (DLV-391) as the one the suspects had been using. When Jaraza's men tried to stop the vehicle, the suspects allegedly opened fire. The police returned fire, killing the two men, records showed.

On Friday, the suspects allegedly robbed Carmen Moje and her driver Gonzalo Abagon at the corner of Congressional and Visayas Avenue, police said.

Police said the two suspects were on board a motorcycle when they fired on the victims' vehicle.

When the victims' vehicle was disabled, suspect Jose Tactacon and an unidentified man, took Moje's handbag containing cash.

Later, Moje identified the other man as Galoso, police said.

Moje, who had to be confined in a hospital after she was shot in the foot, also said the suspects followed her from a bank in the area where she withdrew some P100,000.

Jaraza said they have another witness who can testify that the suspects returned fire during the shootout.

A day after the incident, relatives of the suspects were interviewed on television and said that Quezon City lawmen executed the two men.

WITH one eye swollen shut, Norman Tulabot listens as Camp Crame officials accuse him of masterminding the kidnapping of Dr. Charmaine Ong in Valenzuela City in 2002. DENNIS SABANGAN

Kidnap suspect nabbed

By Tina Santos and TJ Burgonio

AFTER months of surveillance, police finally arrested the suspected leader of the gang that snatched a daughter of a wealthy Chinese-Filipino family in Valenzuela City last year.

Members of the arresting team said Norman Tulabot, 55, of Marulas, Valenzuela, put up a fight when he was arrested in his hideout on Guzman Street in Quiapo, Manila at around 6:30 a.m. Saturday.

Tulabot's right eye was swollen shut when he was presented to the media yesterday.

Northern Police District Office director Senior Supt. Marcelino Franco Jr. said Tulabot is the uncle of Alex Advento, an agent of the National Bureau of Investigation, who was earlier arrested for the same crime.

Franco said Tulabot masterminded the June 12 kidnapping of dermatologist Dr. Charmaine Ong, 30, only daughter of the owner of the CDO meat factory in BBB, Marulas.

Two days later, she escaped from her abductors in Pampanga under mysterious circumstances.

After her escape, rumors began to spread in the Chinese community that Ong's family paid P50 million in ransom. Ong refused to talk to the police after she reportedly escaped.

Policemen are now tracking down Tulabot's three other cohorts, according to Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., chief of the Philippine National Police.

Balintawak bus bombing suspect pleads not guilty

By Agnes E. Donato

THE MAN suspected of blowing up a passenger bus in Balintawak yesterday pleaded not guilty to the double murder charges filed against him before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

Jerry Minalang, 37, of Sapang Bato, Bagong Bayan, Libis, Quezon City, was accused of planting a bomb on board a Golden Hi-Way Transit bus while it was plying the Cubao-Malinta route on Oct. 18, 2002.

The bomb exploded on Edsa near the Balintawak area at about 10:15 p.m., killing Fernando Bon and Egisergio Magno Jr., police records showed.

Minalang's arraignment was initially set on Dec. 9, but it was postponed after Quezon City Judge Monina Zeñarosa granted a motion of the prosecution to amend the information filed against the suspect.

In the amended information, the prosecutors said that Minalang, along with four other unidentified men, "willfully, unlawfully and feloniously, with intent to kill ... (planted) a bomb inside a Golden Hi-Way bus, and caused it to explode."

Judge Zenarosa also allowed Minalang to undergo medical examination.

In a motion, Minalang has claimed that he was subjected to torture while undergoing investigation by members of the Western Police District following his arrest.

Members of the Central Police District's Criminal Investigation Unit arrested Minalang on Oct. 28, after a witness to the bombing reportedly identified him as the man who got off the bus just before the explosion.

Minalang was reportedly put on probation after another Quezon City judge had convicted him of an illegal drugs case filed against him in 1999.

Palace. . .

From page A17

because the two mayors dared to oppose Fernando's hard-nosed sidewalk clearing operations, said Don Pangan whose group Sanlakas is backing the Metro Manila Vendors' Alliance.

"They're acceptable to us," Pangan said. "But the more important thing is that Fernando's replacement should not continue the oppressive policies against vendors."

Unlike Fernando, Atienza and Abalos have been negotiating with vendors to help them find alternative spaces before moving them out of the sidewalks, according to Pangan.

"Fernando is very different," Pangan said. "The word negotiation is not in his vocabulary."

But on the part of Metro Manila mayors, they don't want Fernando to leave the MMDA. They even want Fernando to head the MMDA and Public Works at the same time, according to Pasay Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad.

"He's done a lot for the good of Metro Manila," Trinidad said. "He should really stay and finish the projects he started. But if that can't be, (he as) concurrent MMDA and (Public Works) chair would be okay."

Yesterday, Fernando admitted that he is still in a quandary on whether to take up the President's offer for him to assume the Public Works post.

But if ever he moves to the Department of Public Works and Highways, he vowed that the public has not seen the last of his controversial, hard-nosed sidewalk clearing drive.

Fernando revealed he is reluctant to leave his current position, even while he says the ultimate decision on his transfer rests with the president.

"What makes the decision (to transfer) difficult is the approval that Metro Manilans have for the projects I initiated at the MMDA," he told reporters during his weekly news conference. "I value public acceptance. It becomes a commitment on my part. If I leave, they might be disappointed."

Fernando has been tapped to replace Simeon Datumanong, who will leave the DPWH to take over the Department of Justice.

20 security men rapped for Pasig City gunfight

By Nelson Flores

POLICE yesterday filed criminal charges against 20 security guards who figured in a brief gun battle over a disputed lot in Ortigas Center, Pasig City last Saturday where a security man died.

Charged with homicide and frustrated homicide before the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office were Allan Clemente, Carlo Estrebor, Rolando Leopoldo, Edibert Palo, Noel Sawadan, Alex Torren, Edilberto Buntag, Divencio Elemino, Ronnie Serna, Meliton Sagurot, and Rolando Remullo, all employees of St. Vincent Security Agency.

Also charged were Ronnie Villarba, Gregory Albano, Louie Jurado, Bienvenido Tejero Jr., Christopher Yuper, Bernardo Trabucon, Gaspar Samuya, John Pascua, and Johnny Gicana of the Task Force Security Agency.

Police records showed that the gun battle happened at about 12:30 p.m. when TFSA guards prevented SVSA security personnel from entering the former Payanig sa Pasig compound in Barangay Ugong. It is still not clear who actually fired the first shot as both parties have accused each other of starting the shooting.

During the exchange of gunfire, SVSA guard Rolando Gavieta was killed while Gicana was wounded.

The gun battle ended only after both sides ran out of ammunition. Responding Pasig City policemen recovered 36 firearms, including an M16 rifle.

According to records, the Presidential Commission on Good Government sequestered the controversial compound, but the Madrigal-Acop Estate, which has interests in the property, contested the sequestration. The PCGG hired the TFSA to guard the property which has an estimated value of P18 billion, while the Madrigal-Acop estate took on the services of the SVSA to secure their interests.

Supt. Tomasito Clet, Pasig City police chief, said all firearms used in the shootout were already sent to the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory for ballistic examination.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY)—Complex crime of robbery with rape—For a conviction of the crime of robbery with rape to stand, it must be shown that the rape was committed by reason or on the occasion of a robbery and not the other way around. This special complex crime under Article 294 of the Revised Penal Code contemplates a situation where the original intent of the accused was to take, with intent to gain, personal property belonging to another and rape is committed on the occasion thereof or as an accompanying crime. In this type of felony, the intent to gain precedes the intent to have illegal carnal intercourse with another, since robbery with rape is basically a crime against property. And if the original design was to commit rape but the accused, after committing rape, also committed robbery, because the opportunity presented itself, the criminal acts should be viewed as two distinct offenses. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, People v. Tamayo, G. R. No. 137586, July 30, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, January 7, 2003
After Epiphany

1st Reading:	1 Jn 4:7-10
Gospel:	Mk 6:34-44

As Jesus went ashore he saw a large crowd, and he had compassion on them for they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began a long teaching session with them.

It was now getting late, so his disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place and it is now late. You should send the people away and let them go to the farms and villages around here to buy themselves something to eat."

Jesus replied, "You yourselves give them something to eat." They answered, "If we are to give them food, we must go and buy two hundred silver coins' worth of bread." But Jesus said, "You have some loaves: how many? Go and see." The disciples found out and said, "There are five loaves and two fish."

Then he told them to have the people sit down together in groups on the green grass. This they did in groups of hundreds and fifties. And Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish and, raising his eyes to heaven, he pronounced a blessing, broke the loaves and handed them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them.

They all ate and everyone had enough. The disciples gathered up what was left and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces of bread and fish. Five thousand men had eaten there.

Commentary

There are blessed moments in our lives when we share in the sentiments of the Good Shepherd's heart; when, like him, we are moved by compassion to respond to the hungers of the shepherdless crowd. But often too, we are besieged by the doubts and anxieties of the disciples. Hungers today are so many and manifold: people hunger for food, for shelter, for security, for peace, for freedom from illness and oppression, for dignity, for community and belonging, for a sense of life's meaning, for God, and for his Jesus. The hungry are so numerous. How do we feed so many with the little we have? Perhaps we glimpse some kind of response to our question in today's gospel. The disciples' meager provisions of bread and fish became a feast for thousands when placed at Jesus' disposal; when they were offered to Jesus to take, to bless, to break and to give. So can it be with our own limited resources if they are surrendered and offered up to the true shepherd and host of God.

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Philfoodex holds 2nd Philippine Food Expo

ESTABLISHED in 1986 with the sole objective of achieving world-class stature for Philippine products, the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization Inc. (Philfoodex) is recognized as the voice of food manufacturers and exporters. Envisioning itself as an internationally renowned Philippine food organization adopting practices that will contributed to environmentally sustainable businesses and enhance competitiveness in the global market, Philfoodex members hope their activities benefit their employees, consumers, stockholders and the communities they operate in. Composed of small, medium and large-sized food manufacturers, the organization currently has more than 200 members to date.

Philfoodex is also known as the organization that started the first Philippine Food Expo. With the second expo slated for Jan. 29 to Feb. 2, the trade fair is designed to bring together all levels of the food industry for mutual benefit and to showcase the latest technology and trends in the food business. The exposition will also be packed with seminars and demonstrations by experts tapped to speak on subjects such as accreditation and international standards, registration in foreign markets, packaging, merchandising and branding. There will be culinary demonstrations and competitions and participants are encouraged to also avail of workshops and consultations on various topics such as product label and analysis evaluation or product improvement and development sessions. Occupying the Megatrade Halls the five-day show will feature a cross-section of food industry giants from farmer cooperatives, raw-material suppliers, to important food retail distribution chains. As early as October 2002, one hundred participants from various regions have already signed up to exhibit their wares. Supported by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Agriculture, the event promises to be a one-stop extravaganza that will educate and broaden everyone's idea of Philippine food and the products the country should be proud to call its own.

Included in the expo are food processors, fresh and processed fruits, fresh and processed seafood, snacks and confections, bakery products, herbal organic food, food equipment and packaging, food services, native delicacies by TFSI. Aisle locators in the trade hall will ensure easy movement around the expo, allowing participants to explore and enjoy the show. The expo also allows visitors to witness the unique privilege Philfoodex enjoys working with both the government and private sector on issues that affect the Philippine food industry, ensuring that the industry achieves and sustains global competitiveness and excellence – to help the government in its thrust to ensure food security and abundance, as well as sustain the country's economic growth.

For more information on the second 2nd Philippine Food Expo, call 436-3556, 4363557 or 925-3519. Or you may write to Philifoodex, room 305, Bahay ng Alumni, Ramon Magsaysay Avenue, UP Diliman, 1103 Quezon City.

2003 GOLD QUILL CO-PRESENTER

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippine chapter, together with Mirant Philippines as co-presenter, recently launched the 2nd Gold Quill Philippine Awards. The annual Gold Quill Awards, given by the US-based IABC, is the most prestigious recognition given to the best communication programs. Just like its international counterpart, the local Gold Quill Awards features 17 divisions. Mirant Philippines, a wholly owned subsidiary of Atlanta-based Mirant Corporation, is the largest private producer of electricity in the country. In photo are (from left, seated) Art Cariaga, IABC executive director; Roni Tapia-Merk, IABC president and 2003 Gold Quill Philippines Awards chair; Allan Paul Flake, Mirant Philippines vice president for external affairs; and Ramon Osorio, IABC executive vice president; (from left, standing) Buboy Sarte, IABC project officer and Kim de Leon, Mirant Philippines corporate communications manager. The IABC Gold Quill entries must have produced measurable results during 2002. The materials may be produced in 2001 but implemented in 2002. Deadline for submission is Jan. 10 for early bird and absolute deadline is Jan. 20.

Win a brand new Ford Explorer from Johnnie Walker

ADD a brand new Ford Explorer to your garage or win a million pesos through *Mga Santa Claus ng Bayan, Panalo sa Duty Free ng Bayan*, a joint project raffle promo by Johnnie Walker Black Label, the world's favorite Scotch whisky and Duty Free Philippines.

Any purchase of a special Johnnie Walker pack in Duty Free Philippines Fiestamall automatically gives you an instant prize peel card which rewards you with instant and exciting prizes such as DVD players, 14" colored TV, 21" flat TV, CD/VCD stereo components, portable CD players and other Johnnnie Walker exclusive gift items. You will also receive raffle coupons which serve as your entries to the grand raffle draw on Feb. 15 where you can win a brand new Ford Explorer or 1 million pesos in cash – tax free.

Buy a special Johnnie Walker pack now and win these first class prizes from Johnnie Walker and Duty Free Philippines. Promo is until Jan. 31 only.

Robinsons
Home Stretch Promo
Get a chance to win one of 3
to Jan. 6
HEIGHTS

RDS AND ROBINSONS HOMES TIE-UP FOR RAFFLE PROMO

Robinsons Department Store (RDS) recently signed a partnership agreement with Robinsons Homes, Inc. (RHI) for its 'Home Stretch' Christmas Grand Raffle Promo. Signing the agreement were (from left) Ronald Torrella, AVP-marketing of RHI; Graham Coates, RDS general manager; and Manolito Nebre, RHI sales operations manager. The promo, which gives away three house and lot packages at RHI South Square Village in Cavite, is ongoing at RDS branches at Robinsons Galleria; Robinsons Place Manila, Novaliches, Imus, Cebu, Sta. Rosa, Bacolod, Iloilo; Robinsons Metro East, Robinsons Starmills Pampanga, Robinsons Town Mall Los Baños, Tutuban Center, Starmall Shaw, Metropolis Star Alabang; and Waltermart Sta. Rosa and Gen. Trias. Customers who make a minimum purchase of P200 are entitled to one raffle coupon, which can be claimed at designated promo booths in the stores. The last draw will be held on Jan. 10.

Students urged to join Photoworld Manila 2003

STUDENTS taking up Fine Arts, Communication Arts, Masscom, Advertising, Journalism, Information Technology and other courses requiring photography as a subject are urged to join Photoworld Manila 2003, the biggest and longest running photography event in Southeast Asia.

These students can attend a series of photography seminars to be held at the Asian Institute of Management in Makati City from Jan. 18 to 20, according to Jun Rapanan, PWM 2003 chair.

The seminars will be conducted by topnotch local and foreign photographers who will lecture on the latest trend and technology and share their expertise and experiences to the participants.

The student fee is only P1,500.

Jun Rapanan advises students especially those taking up courses with photography as a requirement and out-of-school youth to attend the seminars. He says they can learn more from the master photographers and at the same time share and exchange ideas with other participants.

The PWM 2003 chair adds Photoworld Manila is organized by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation Inc. which is behind the unprecedented growth of photography in the country. FPPF organizers every year series of basic and advanced photography courses. Many graduates of the seminars have become active amateur and professional photographers while others enter into business.

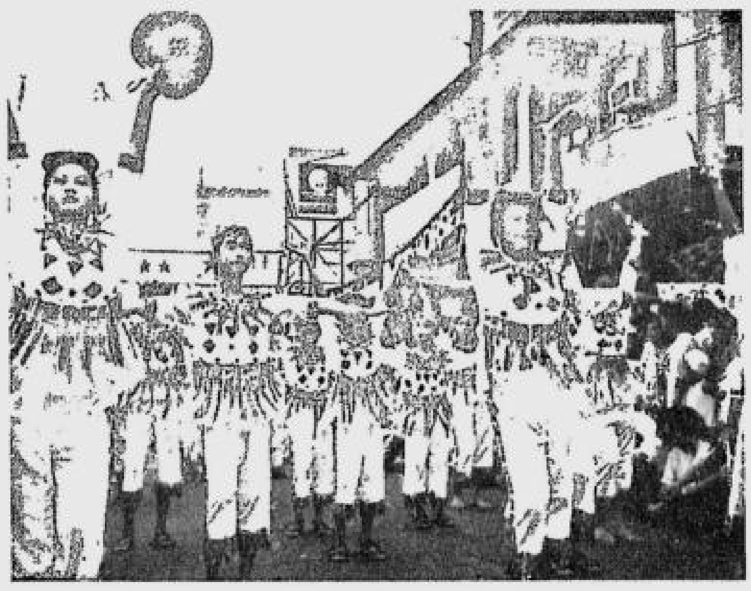
Those interested can coordinate with the FPPF care of Amil de Castro or Beverly Estrosas at seventh floor Comfoods Building, Sen Gil Puyat Avenue corner Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City, 843-5341/ 813-7420.

FASHION CZAR HOSTS DINNER

Mindanao fashion czar Alfonso Guino-o recently hosted a dinner to 'balikbayans' and some friends from Manila. The dinner was held at the Thai Ming restaurant in Davao City located at The Venue Compound. Present were Dr. Francis Talangbayan, a presidential awardee with wife Cristy and daughter April, publicist Ayo G. Gunting, Mrs Belen Saramusing of Washington D.C. and Amy Oropesa, Eming and Connie Dy of Thai Ming resto and Gene Bangayan, owner of The Venue and Linmarr Hotel.

AUBREY MILES JOINS LTDI FAMILY

Aubrey Miles join the La Tondeña Distillers Inc. (LTDI) family as its calendar girl for 2003. Present during the contract signing are: (from left, seated) Menlou B. Bibonia, San Miguel Corp. (SMC) vice president for corporate marketing; LTDI president and chief operating officer Arnaldo L. Africa; and SMC senior vice-president and corporate sales director Roberto N. Huang. Also present are: (from left, standing) LTDI marketing manager Ramon S. Reyes; Miles' manager Dondon Monteverde; LTDI national sales manager Pablo P. Pacquing; and SMC vice-president for legal department Roberto T. Ongsaiko. LTDI sponsored a media launch for Miles last Nov. 25 at the Imperial Hotel in Quezon City. She had a grand launch last Nov. 30 at the Tutuban Activity Center parking lot.



COCONUT FESTIVAL 2003

On the second week of January, San Pablo City pays tribute to the 'True of Life', a week long celebration which culminates in a festival, highlighted by a street dancing and float parade through the main street, where participants clad in colorful costumes made of coconut-derived materials. To experience this one-of-a-kind event, Causeway Tours will organize a whole day package tour on Jan. 12 at P1,000/person included of private transportation, lunch, snack and assistance of tour guides/escorts. For inquiries and reservations, call Causeway Tours at tel. nos. 851-7294, 853-8728 or cellphone (0916) 396-3963.

Protect your life, save your car through Txt n' Trak

MOTORKINGDOM Corp. introduces its new tracking device system for cars called "Txt n' Trak. It's new highly innovative, revolutionary device that generates text messages from your car to your GSM mobile phone via Global Positioning System (GPS). Txt n' Trak provides its customers the accuracy in tracking their vehicles nationwide; security and prevention from carnapping, kidnapping or hold-ups and assistance in case of emergencies such as road accidents, towing assistance and among others.

For inquiries and information visit www.motorkingdomplus.com or www.yupangconet.com or call us at 899-9821 to 19, 899-9595 local 343, 345 or text at 0917-8351111, email at motorkingcorp@hotmail.com

Charantia takes the lead in improving quality of life for diabetics

HERBACARE Corp., the company that manufacturers Charantia Ampalaya health drink and capsules began its operations in mid-1999. Its first variant, tea in loose bits was launched in January 2000 as a health drink that is made from 100 percent fruits and seeds of ampalaya.

Lito Abelarde, Herbcare's president avers that the product is now readily available in three variants – loose tea bits, tea bags or 500mg capsules, to suit one's budget, taste and convenience. All are reasonably priced so that diabetics can easily afford to make it a part of their daily diet.

It is estimated that there are about 5 million Filipinos who suffer from this "lifestyle disease". Although Herbcare possesses a most comprehensive collection of scientific reports done worldwide which practically confirms the Ampalaya plant's antidiabetic potency and that its fruits and seeds are its most potent parts, the company does not excessively promote Charantia's health-giving benefits other than what is solidly based upon – the result of a clinical trial of their finished product. According to Abelarde, "Charantia was 'conducted by independent diabetologists who found it a safe useful food supplement in the treatment of type 2 diabetes.

Furthermore, Abelarde said that the basis of their claim as being, "The result of a clinical trial of a product, itself – and not just the studies of the Ampalaya as raw material is a very important point – as transforming a plant part to a finished consumer product involves processing and preserving the plant parts. If the wrong process is utilized, it is quite possible the raw materials' safety and potency can be lost, diminished or altered during the process."

Thus, Charantia being the only Ampalaya food supplement product in the market today whose safety and potency has been proven by a clinical trial makes it so far, the most reliable product for a diabetic to choose from among other similar products in the market today.

In all of the company's promotional and advertising campaigns, Charantia's claims underscores its benefits as adjunct in the treatment of type 2 diabetes, to be taken as part of a healthy diet, together with the doctor-prescribed primary medication and regular exercise. "We absolutely do not claim that Charantia is a universal panacea or cure-all product. To do so would be grossly irresponsible and fallacious," Abelarde stressed.

Their strict adherence to company policy to promote Charantia based only on credible evidence has been the key to the decision of many doctors to try this herbal product. Abelarde shared that "After the doctors prescribed Charantia to their patients as an add-on to their diet and primary medicine, the doctors found that consistent with the positive result of the clinical trial, their patients are having an easier time controlling their blood sugar. Today, an increasing number of doctors in the country are regularly giving Charantia to their diabetic patients and those at risk.

In October 2001, Charantia was given the unprecedented distinction of being officially endorsed by an influential national medical association as food supplement for diabetics. The Association of Municipal Health Officers of the Philippines (Amhop) composed of doctors who run our country's network of municipal health centers declared thus: "that treatment of diabetes that is well-priced within the reach of our patients." The Amhop doctors served the majority of the population in the rural areas who are mostly poor and have difficulty meeting the high price of medicine.

As a socially responsible company, Abelarde's ethical business practice can only be summed up as transparent, forthright, credible and consistent. "We are committed to the vision – to our valued customers, our distributors, our suppliers, employees, the core investors and myself and the community at large. Everything that we do are measured by our corporate goals.

The company's genuine concern for the interests of everyone is what further devices Herbcare to the company that leads in truly contributing to the improvement of the people's health and quality of life.

New Philtranco cargo service promises faster, safer delivery at less cost

FASTER, more secure delivery of packages and cargo to and from any point along Philtranco's nationwide transport network from Pasay to Davao at even lesser cost is what the bus company's *Biyaheng Pinoy Kargo*, promises individual shippers, freight forwarders and cargo consolidators.

Philtranco president Alejandro R. Yague Jr. said that Philtranco *Biyaheng Pinoy Kargo* has the decided advantage of offering the fastest, most secure and most affordable rates for the delivery of these goods considering Philtranco's fleet of more than 300 buses plying their daily route along Southern Luzon, Eastern and Central Visayas and Mindanao.

"We are probably the only bus company that visits more than 1000 cities, municipalities and barangays throughout the country as part of a day's work," Yague proudly says. "With such a wide and extensive network, we believe we can handle cargo delivery the way we have handled passengers in the last 88 years – faster, more secure and with even more efficiency," he added.

Philtranco is the country's pioneering bus company. Founded in Iriga in 1914, it antedates by a few months the American transport icon, Greyhound Lines Inc. The transport company's entry into expanded cargo delivery, apart from maintaining its regular passenger and commuter service, is acknowledgement that people will travel less and less as a result of advances in telecommunications and the rise in e-business transactions.

"We recognize that the new strides in communication technology will lessen the people's need to travel far distances regularly," Yague asserts. "People now can just text their orders to their Manila supplier and expect these goods to be delivered right at their doorstep. Whoever handles this delivery for them faster and at less cost, gets that part of the business. *Biyaheng Pinoy Kargo* intends to fill that gap," Yague adds.

Philtranco's expanded cargo system is expected to benefit large manufacturers and freight forwarders who need to regularly ship their merchandise or goods to areas where Philtranco is considered the dominant player.

Philtranco's round the clock transport facility enables its buses to be anywhere in Camarines Sur in seven hours; the Bicol region in eight hours or less; Samar and Leyte from anywhere to 18 to 20 hours. At the rate of one bus dispatch every ten minutes, delivery via Biyaheng Pinoy Kargo is surely on its way in less than a day.

POWER
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GORDON CHANG VISITS POWERBOOKS

Visiting author Gordon Chang shared his knowledge on the real situation of China in an insightful talk and book signing recently at Powerbooks Arnaiz. Gordon Chang was accompanied by his wife Lydia, and Random House Publishing regional sales manager Rino Balatbat. His complete treatise on China is brilliantly presented in his book, The Coming Collapse of China, which incidentally is Powerbooks' book of the month last December. In photo are (from left) Rino Balatbat, Lydia Chang, Gordon Chang, and Powerbooks operations manager Gabby Licauco.

CONGRATULATIONS!
First Batch Of Awardees

RLC RECOGNIZES SALES PERFORMERS

Robinsons Land Corporation high rise buildings division (RLC) headed by its general manager Danilo E. Ignacio (seated center) recently recognized its top sales performers for 2002 by rewarding them with a 3 days and 2 nights trip to Hong Kong. The first batch of awardees to receive the recognition are (1st row from left) Marites Jacosalem, sales manager; Cosette Sevilla, sales manager; Danilo E. Ignacio, Robinsons Land Corporation high rise buildings division general manager; Marites Roa, account manager; and Alice Sipin, sales manager. (2nd row from left) Dindo Gacutan, account manager; Kim Calinawan, sales director; Dianne Pelobello, sales manager; Jolan Guevarra, sales manager; Leah Guntan, account manager; Michael Garcia, sales manager; Ivy Villegas, account manager; and Richard Predas, sales manager. For more information, call Roseann Coscuella-Villegas at tel. nos. 395-2507, 687-5681, locals 355 or 356 / email: roseann@rlc.com.ph

Petrosaver pil engine refiner

INSPIRED by a growing demand for products and services that fill the need and meet the exacting requirements of various markets, ECO-TECH born here in the Philippines.

It is the development, distribution and advancement of distinctive products and services that uphold a genuine ecological concern to the populace and effects a thorough enhancement and betterment of everyday living that ECO-TECH envisions. Subsequently, the inspiration that will be stimulated by such noble thrusts shall lead to further enrichment of products and services among various groups of people.

Eco-tech is committed to ensuring that the products and services it has developed and distributed speak well of the company, achieve a high rate of preference among its target markets is positioned at the apex of related products and services right above its competition, and assuredly establish unrelenting market dominance.

The company is continuously conducting scientific research that result in a most objective consumption statistics to be used for further product improvement and the development and research of complementary products and services.

With a revolutionary technology that is born in the aerospace industry, one of our major product is the "PetroSaver Oil Refiner" presents a major shift in maintaining internal combustion engines of land, air and water vehicles such as car, buses, trucks shipping vessels and aircraft as well as industrial- application machinery. This technology involves a remarkable extension of oil use, virtually eliminating engine oil change, and extending overhaul intervals. Clearly, the PetroSaver Engine Oil Refiner renders essential solutions to both the economic and environment issues of the 21st Century.

Photo shows the Marketing Director of Eco-Tech International Trading Mr. Sam Hamdan demonstrates how Petrosaver works to USEC. Arturo T. Valdez, Undersecretary for transportation, during the Philtronics Inviro-Tech 2002 Exhibit at the World Trade Center last Nov. 6-9, 2002.

"A LITTLE PAIN... A LIFE ...-GIVE

MONARK RECEIVES AWARD FROM PNRC

Monark, sole dealer of Caterpillar received a certificate of appreciation from the Philippine National Red Cross for their support of PNRC's Blood Services and the country's Blood Program. Photo taken during the awarding of the certificate of recognition (from left): Gov. Lina Aurelio, PNRC Blood Services Committee; Rosa Rosal, PNRC board of director; and Lorna Pabelico, Monark human resource director.

Bombo Radyo holds annual confab

BOMBO Radyo Philippines, the undisputed number 1 radio network in the country, has finalized the blueprint for 2003 with a 4-day strategic planning conference early this year. Held at the famed Asian Institute of Management in Makati from Jan. 2 to 5, this year's Top Level Management Conference (TLMC) was participated in by the top executives of the network and of its 43-strong Bombo Radyo (AM) and Star FM (FM) stations nationwide.

This yearly endeavor proved to be a significant ingredient to the network's continuous dominance in the radio industry. "To act intelligently and effectively, especially in a harsh economic environment, we must have a plan," advocates Rogelio M. Florete, president and chief executive officer of the thriving network. "It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret," adds Florete, a stickler for planning.

This year's theme is A.R.T. – acronym for Advanced Radio Technology, a testament to the network's plunge into the latest of information and communications technology via a whopping one hundred million pesos (Php 100M) earmarked for the project. Despite the raging economic turbulence, the network has decided to bite the bullet and invest in the latest equipment and human resources with the belief that such investment, especially in information technology, is what is needed in doing business now and in the future. The said investments have certainly been paying off for the network. An affirmation to this, among others, is the latest official survey in Mega Manila proclaiming once again 102.7 Star FM Manila as the overall number 1 radio station for eight straight years.

INTERNATIONAL QUALITY STAR

PINOY FIRM BAGS AWARD IN GENEVA

The International Selection Committee of Business Initiative Directions awarded for the year 2002, the 27th Int'l Star Quality Award to a Filipino firm, Excel Frames & Decors. The awarding ceremony took place at the Convention Hall of the Intercontinental Geneve Hotel, Geneva, Switzerland. This is the most prestigious Int'l Quality Award Excellence in Europe that recognizes and award the best among the best companies in the business field worldwide annually. Excel Frames & Decors has been exporting and manufacturing picture frames, mirror frames, jewelry boxes, clocks religious icons and other decors made of carefully handcrafted Mt. Pinatubo ashes since 1992. World class quality giveaways intended for weddings, corporate, debut, personal and all occasions are available both for export and local market. Excel Frames & Decors is CC100-TQM certified, a European Seal of World class excellence. Photo shows Mr Sonny Osi (right) president and CEO of Excel Frames & Decors receiving the International Star Quality Award in Platinum Category from Mr Jose Prieto, BID president in Geneva, Switzerland.

4th WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES
COMMEMORATIVE LICENSE
PLATE
WMF

4TH WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES (WMF) CAR PLATE

Launched recently is the WMF commemorative license plate as part of the celebration in welcoming thousands of delegates from all over the world to the 4th World Meeting of Families to be held here in Manila. Philippines was specifically chosen by the Holy Father Pope John Paul II as the venue of this international gathering of families to celebrate the Good News of Christ's love. Jaime Cardinal Sin is presented this plate by Michael Ballon, COO of GJB Enterprises Inc. (exclusive manufacturer of the WMF plate). Also present were Amb. Henrietta de Villa, executive secretary, WMF Central Committee and Sis. Flor Deza, SPC, executive secretary, International Theological Congress. The 4th World Meeting of Families is going to be held in Manila on Jan. 22 to 26. Held twice in Rome, Italy and once in Rio de Janairo, Brazil. To avail of the WMF commemorative car plate call 895-6566-67, fax 899-5959 or through email gjb@pacific.net.ph.

Sony Philippines joins Photoworld Manila 2003

SONY Philippines is among major exhibitors in Photoworld Manila 2003, the country's biggest and longest running photography event, which will be held on Jan. 17 to 22 at the Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City.

Now on its 8th year, PWM enjoys wide participation from foreign photo professionals and distributors. Among the event's features are a trade exhibit showcasing the latest models of photo equipment; a photo exhibit to be participated in by various prestigious camera clubs and affiliated organizations; the proclamation of the Photoworld Cup winners; daily photo contests featuring photo sessions with models; and series of educational seminars designed to update the photographers on the latest trends and developments in the photo world. Promo items will also be available at special discounted prices, according to the organizers, the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation chaired by noted photographer Edi Huang.

Sony Phils. has launched recently the new series Cyber-shot U (DSC-U20) – the hip, ultra-small digital camera that has taken Asia by storm. Now with a 2.0 mega pixels Super HAD CCD for even better picture quality.

Riding on a fashion wave that Cyber-shot U has created last August, the new Cyber-shot U (DSC-U20) is the digital camera for the young and trendy. Smaller than the newest mobile photo, it is ultra-chic, funky and absolutely functional. Available in ultra black, bubbly blue and silver rush colors, it's a must-have accessory.

CAROLING FOR A CAUSE

Last December, Foodparks by Raintree, the leader in themed food court management, brought Caroling for a Cause. Kids from various charitable institutions took center stage as they sung Christmas carols to regular diners of Foodpark at the Enterprise Center and Food Odyssey at LKG Tower both in Makati City. Last Dec. 18, children from Ina-anak Inc., an NGO for women and children of marginalized societies and Paaralang Pantao, a supporter of educating underprivileged children who are forced to work in dumpsites s scavengers sung Christmas carols at Foodpark at the Enterprise. Sabana (Samahan ng mga Batang Nananambakan), a development center for children scavengers and Daan Para sa Kabataan, an institution dedicated to educating the street children of Malibay, Pasay performed at Food Odyssey at LKG Tower last Dec. 20. For inquiries on upcoming events and bookings at any Foodpark by Raintree outlet, call the marketing department at 752-5678.

Ricky Reyes life story airs on GMA 7

THE NAME Ricky Reyes is synonymous to beauty.

Now a multi-millionaire, Reyes owns more than 40 salons all over the country, is the prime mover of the project "Isang Gunting Isang Suklay," founder of Fil-Hair Co-Op and host of 12-time PMPC Star Awards for TV awardee for best educational and lifestyle program, "Beauty Plus" (RPN 9).

Reyes is also a benefactor to charitable institutions like home for the aged, association of senior citizens, home for street children and the Philippine General Hospital cancer ward for children called "Munting Paraiso."

But Ricky Reyes was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His is a rags to riches climb to the top, as proven by his biography penned by Abe Florendo. The book serves as inspiration to countless gay hairdressers, who now adhere to Mother Ricky's philosophy, "If I can do it, you can do it also."

Reyes' life is both colorful and dramatic. This is the reason GMA 7 production executives Wilma Galvante, Marivin Arayata and Redgie Magno deem it wise and appropriate to have his story featured in the weekly drama anthology, "Magpakailanman," hosted by Mel Tiangco (Monday, 9 to 10:30 p.m.) and directed by Argel Joseph.

Ricky was initially adamant to dramatize his life story on a teleplay.

"*Ayaw ko sana dahil gusto ko* low profile *lang ako lagi*," Ricky avers. "But when Wilma, Avin and Redgie explained to me that my story will serve as an inspiration to many hard-up Filipinos, especially the gay hairdressers who are dear to my heart, I finally gave them my go-signal.

"I love helping the needy and if my life story can encourage near-hopeless people to fight on, then this is my way of conveying to them the message that *habang may buhay, masipag ka, may ambisyon at naniniwala sa Diyos*, success won't be far behind."

The Ricky Reyes life story will air Jan. 13 on GMA 7.

Playing the lead in the teleplay is multi-talented singer-actor Janno Gibbs.

INSPIRATION. The bio-pic of noted hairdresser Ricky Reyes (right) will be aired in the drama anthology "Magpakailanman," hosted by Mel Tiangco.

Dish bares impressive lineup of bands, artists

SHOWS

DISH unloads its impressive lineup of bands and artists for the new year, starting off with Paolo Santos and Noel Cabangon, who provide soothing and relaxing mood on Sundays.

Be upbeat for the rest of the week with Hyperbeat, which carries out unique and funky moves on Mondays.

A little nostalgia won't do any harm, so get into those dancing shoes as Spirit of '67 comes alive on Tuesdays.

Spend quality time with the one you love and listen to the endearing sounds of Freestyle on Wednesdays.

Groove to the music of South Border with their R&B repertoire, soul and mainstream pop music on their first month-long singing engagement at Dish every Thursday.

Feel the distinct sounds of Barbie's Cradle and Pido with Take One as they take center stage on Fridays.

Liven up Saturday nights with Rage band's electrifying performance of the '80s back-to-back with Crosswaves and cool retro music.

Dish's red-letter day is on Jan. 31, when Martin Nievera holds a special benefit concert. Proceeds will be for the Philippine Cerebral Palsy Foundation.

Comedian Rex Navarette heats up the crowd with beaming faces and unstoppable laughter as he performs his latest antics in "E-Rex-Ion at Tito Boy's Sala," Feb. 1 (Saturday).

Repeat performance

BRAZIL. Return engagement at Merk's.

AFTER her successful homecoming concert last Dec. 11, grand lady of jazz Annie Brazil returns to Merk's Bar Bistro in a special show, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," tonight.

Brazil and Posadas last teamed up in Bangkok where at one time, they rubbed elbows with such jazz legends as Duke Ellington and Sarah Vaughn.

For her return engagement, Annie will be assisted by the Posadas Trio with Roger Herrera (bass) and Mar Dizon (drums).

Sharing Annie's passion for jazz is her musical director Romy Posadas, with whom she has jammed many times over during their jazz-days in Bangkok where her former husband was a promoter of big-time jazz icons.

Annie Brazil leaves for New York Jan. 16 after spending Christmas and New Year in Manila.

For inquiries to the show, call Pam or Rachel at 757-4720 or 757-4721.

Latin sounds

IF YOU go for authentic Latin music, hop over to Merk's Bar Bistro and listen to the sounds of Aquarela on Jan. 13.

Aquarela is a genuine Latin band whose repertoire includes Caribbean merengue, Brazilian samba, bossa nova and its own renditions of Latin pop favorites and original compositions.

The band is led by Miguel Juteau, son of a Spanish mother and a French father. Miguel studied classic guitar in France and learned flamenco with Spanish gypsies. He led several bands in Spain, Hong Kong and France and also recorded singles with them.

He achieves the most authentic Latin sound by playing the acoustic guitar and singing a great variety of the finest Brazilian and Latin composers.

Singing alongside Miguel is his wife Evelyn, a gifted singer from Cebu. Her warm and sultry vocal performances have charmed audiences here and abroad.

Nards Reyes is a master of Latin percussion and rhythms. Drummer Teddy Tipon is one of the country's most sought-after session musicians.

Dix Lucero on alto sax specializes in jazz melodies and has recorded three albums.

Roberto Buena's expertise on bass is enough to make audiences swing.

Aquarela is known to breathe new life into classic Latin tunes.

Merk's Bar Bistro is at the third level of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City.

For more information, call 757-4720 and 757-4721.

Voices and guitar

CHOREOGRAPHER AND SINGER. Para Isidro (left) with Bituin Escalante.

"HAVE I Told You Today That I Love You" will be staged for two nights, Jan. 24 (Friday) and 25 (Saturday).

The show highlights, through voice movement and guitar, a spiritual creation that binds people of all cultures and nations.

Bituin Escalante is one of the hottest live performers in the country today and is known for her outstanding performance in the Musical "Rent." She has recently appeared in "The Rocky Horror Show" and will be seen in "Dreamgirls" in March.

Para Isidro is a pioneer of Powerdance, the Philippines' leading contemporary jazz dance company. Her choreography in "Rent" and her work in "Miss Saigon" gave so much to these memorable performances, both in the Philippines and abroad.

"I was inspired to write 'Have I Told You Today That I Love You' while I was in Hong Kong on tour for 'Miss Saigon' and started working on the concepts in October 2001," Para shares.

"Bituin and I have never performed together onstage, even though we have known and respected each other for years.

"When we met at a New Year's live party in Manila last 2001, I knew I had found the person most suited to my concept. I was thrilled when Bituin expressed her enthusiasm for the project.

Para started looking for the right guitarist to complete the threesome.

"I saw Tanapat playing at the Dusit Hotel in Bangkok and knew instantly that my search was over," Para says. "Convincing him was the easy part, but getting him away from his hectic schedule in Thailand to come to the Philippines proved a major obstacle."

THAI GUITARIST. Tanapat Mathayomchand

Organizing three dynamically different performers into one concert is a producer's nightmare, but Para is excited that they have finally set their concert dates.

Tanapat Mathayomchand is in huge demand in Thailand, and a virtuoso jazz guitarist who has performed with some of the great names in jazz today, including Grammy Award-winning group Traveres, Barry White and Kool and the Gang.

Tanapat currently leads his own band, the Tanapat Jazz Group, in Thailand. He is director of jazz department at Silpakon University and director of contemporary music at KPN Music Academy in Thailand.

The world-premiere of "Have I Told You That I Love You" will take place at the Music Museum and will be directed by Douglas Nierras. This is a co-production between Tri-Us Entertainment Limited, an international media company and Balcony Entertainment Inc., a newly established local company.

For inquiries, call Balcony Entertainment Inc. at 826-2446.

January a month of comedy on E! Philippines

E! PHILIPPINES kicks off the year of the goat on a funny note as it showcases the funniest, most hilarious performers on TV and the big screen this month.

The Emmy-nominated E! "True Hollywood Story," which airs Mondays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., will feature the compelling true stories and docu-dramas of some of Hollywood's most prominent comedians and comediennes and the high drama behind some of America's most successful sitcoms.

Find out the truth behind the success stories of the controversial Roseanne, the late lovable John Candy, child star Mackenzie Phillips, teen heartthrob Macaulay Culkin and Freddie Prinze, Chris Farley, Oscar-winner Dudley Moore, Dave Draper and Alicia Silverstone.

Find out the secret of the success of some of America's longest-running sitcoms during the '70s and '80s including "The Dukes of Hazard," "I Dream of Jeannie," "Eight Is Enough," "The Cosby Kids" and "Dennis the Menace."

On "Mysteries and Scandals," which airs at 7:30 p.m., picture America's funniest faces during the early years of film with Groucho Marx, Ernie Kovacs, Desi Arnaz, Oscar Levant, Lenny Bruce and Charlie Chaplin.

E! Philippines is part of RMN Networks nationwide, with RMN Radio and I-FM.

E! Philippines is seen on UHF Channel 31, Channel 64 on Sky-Cable, Channel 58 on Home, Channel 16 on Destiny Cable and Channel 14 on Dream.

E! Networks is the leader in awards show coverages, from the Emmys to the Golden Globes to the Oscars.

Based in Los Angeles, E! Networks is the world's largest producer and distributor of entertainment news and lifestyle-related programming. The company operates E! Entertainment TV, the 24-hour network programming dedicated to the people and events that shape the entertainment world.

Pigging out at Famous

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

SWEETNESS has always been my weakness. Be it in friends, lovers or food.

That's why I immensely enjoyed pigging out with **Eric Quizon** and **Keren Pascual** at their fab dessert bar Famous in Greenbelt 3 (near the cinemas).

The psychedelic Famous décor makes you feel like you're a kid bubbling with excitement as you wait for your favorite dessert to be served. As Eric says, "This is what I call a glamorized ice cream bar."

The menu is so enticing, what with the unique names Eric, Keren and their show biz partners (one of them is **Martin Nievera**) coined for their dishes with matching description. I kept giggling as I glossed over their playfully naughty concoctions.

All the tables and chairs were given by celebrities with their names inscribed on the particular piece of furniture they donated. "The table or the chair must reflect the personality of the star who gave it," quips Eric.

Just looking around the resto trying to decipher the traits of the celebrity based on the furnishings is quite an engaging treat in itself. Then talk about whetting your appetite while waiting for your order.

Later in the evening, Tito **Dolphy**, **Zsa Zsa**, **Vandolph** and the Quizon brood dropped by. Tito Dolphy was my childhood idol—and even to this day, I'm in awe of him. I never missed any of his movies. So when he approached our table, I stood up. Actually, I felt like bowing and kneeling to show my respect and adulation.

His presence does something to you. I almost forgot to sit down until he told me to.

From afar, I saw him motioning to Vandolph to go talk to me. If you remember, I came out with the scoop about Vandolph's love child **Gabrielle** (who happens to be my *hijada*) in the middle of 2001. Initially, Vandolph was mum about the issue, but after his near-fatal car accident, he finally acknowledged the existence of Gabrielle and even started visiting her regularly.

I apologized to Vandolph for whatever undue hassles my exposé may have caused him. I explained that as a single mother, I could not help but sympathize with my friend **Guia** (the baby's mom).

Like a true gentleman (taking after his dad) Vandolph said, "It's alright. *Tapos na 'yun. Kaya nga ako binuhay pa ng Diyos matapos yung kritikal na aksidente ay para kay* Chuba (Gabrielle's pet name)."

Luis Manzano came by, oozing with boyish charms. Ate Vi (**Vilma Santos**) and Doods (**Edu Manzano**) obviously raised him well.

I teased Luis, "So who's the next girl in your life after **Nancy Castiglione**?"

He smiled, "I'm still in the process of elimination."

I shot back, "So am I! Collect and reject."

We both laughed like crazy.

I chided him some more and told him I bumped into **KC Concepcion** awhile ago. "I heard you got a crush on her. Didn't you get to see her?," I asked Luis.

He blushed, "Who wouldn't be smitten with her? I just admire her but we haven't gone out on a date. I guess even before we were born, people were sort of matching us already."

Why him? Why her? Why not?

KC and Luis would really make a *trés charmant* pair.

I was delighted when KC told me she remembers me from all the birthday parties of my kids and sister that she attended.

When I go through my old albums and see KC in pigtails and kiddie clothes, I can't seem to believe she's all grown up now, with her face on huge billboards all over town.

Sharon's *unica hija* has remained so unaffected and gracious. KC is solid proof that over and beyond being a megastar, Sha is a megamom, as well.

Tita **Annabelle Rama** and daughter **Ruffa Gutierrez** were in Famous, too. I'm always fascinated listening to Tita Annabelle's rambling. With her on your side, you can defeat all the Goliaths ever. What a gutsy and fearless woman.

Ruffa, meanwhile, gets more ravishing every time I see her. Guys can only heave a sigh because Ruffa is said to be engaged to her Turkish beau.

Pinky Amador whisked by and when we went to the ladies' room together, I kept ribbing her about the many kinds of orgasmic sounds she made in "The Vagina Monologues."

I teased, "Don't tell me you experienced all those variety of orgasms? You never faked it?"

She laughed, "You know me. Just like you, I don't get into anything without experiencing it fully."

I countered, "Yeah. Nothing half-heartedly, whether it be with our upper or lower halves, with or without a better half."

We laughed non-stop.

As I was on my way to my next gimmick after hanging out at Famous, I felt so light and giddy and I wished that everybody else can see all the famous celebrities the way I see them as honest-to-goodness people. Fame just happens to be their game but maybe, the stars will be given a fair chance not to be judged so cruelly by the public sometimes. After all, behind all those glittering personalities show business has molded are persons to be unfolded.

Friends

IN BEHALF of my "official headquarters" Friends@the Square (St. Francis Square Mandaluyong), I invite you all to party with me and the rest of the fun-loving bunch at Friends all night long. Mondays and Tuesdays are "Oldies But Goodies" nights, with music from the '70s to the '90s.

Wednesdays are "House Music Nights," Thursdays are "Acoustic Nights," (featuring Velcro and **Maegan Aguilar** for January.

Fridays are "BeerQuila Nights" with the Dash band.

Saturdays are "Party Till You Drop Nights," with Guest DJs and Unity Band.

Sundays are "Chill Out Nights," with soothing music.

At Friends, you can even come in shorts so you can unwind before facing another gruelling week.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com

JOLINA A BIG HIT IN DAVAO

Jolina Magdangal's show at The Venue in Davao City last Dec. 21, was a big hit. A mixed crowd, from teenyboppers to forty-something enjoyed listening to her songs, whether it's a pop classic or OPM. Shown with the versatile Jolina is Davaoeña April Talangbayan (right), daughter of Dr. and Ms Francis Talangbayan of Philadelphia, USA.

Angling for Oscars

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MORE early Oscar buzz for the best picture category for the 2002 Academy Awards, which will be handed out on March 23.

"Adoption" by **Spike Jonze.** The film's script is based on screenwriter **Charlie Kaufman**'s real-life struggle to adapt a best-selling book, "The Orchid Thief." **Meryl Streep** plays the novelist, Susan Orlean, and **Nicholas Cage** is cast as Kaufman—and also as his twin brother, Donald. Confounding—but entertainingly so.

"About Schmidt" by **Alexander Payne. Jack Nicholson** carries the film with his Oscar worthy portrayal of a 60-year-old man who realizes that he's wasted his life. **Kathy Bates** is cast as his mother, and attracts a lot of attention with her performance, as well.

"The Pianist" by **Roman Polanski.** Yes, the master filmmaker is back, with a drama about a Polish Jewish pianist who survives the Nazi invasion of Warsaw in World War Two. Polanski was drawn to the script because, when he was a child, he lived in a Krakow ghetto. The title role is played by **Adrien Brody,** who had to learn how to convincingly play **Chopin** on the piano.

"Frida" by **Julie Taymor. Salma Hayek** plays psychologically troubled Mexican painter **Frida Kahlo,** whose marriage to famous muralist **Diego Rivera (Alfred Molina)** was rocked by many problems, not the least of which were her bisexuality and substance-abuse addiction.

"White Oleander" by **Peter Kosminsky.** An adolescent girl is put on foster care when her tortured mother (**Michelle Pfeiffer**) is jailed for murder. **Renee Zellweger** and **Robin Wright Penn** play the girl's temporary mothers.

"Moonlight Mile" by **Brad Silberling. Susan Sarandon** and **Dustin Hofman** play the parent's of a young woman who is murdered by a stalker. Sharing their grief is the murder victim's boyfriend (**Jake Gyllenhael**), who becomes a sort of surrogate or substitute child to them.

"The Four Feathers" by **Shekkhar Kapur.** The film is set in the 19th century. Its protagonist is a soldier (**Heath Ledger**) who is branded a coward, but proves everyone wrong when he goes undercover in North Africa to help his beleaguered regiment.

"Talk to Her" by **Pedro Almodovar.** A drama about the friendship that develops between two men whose loved ones are both in a coma. Lead roles are played by **Javier Camara, Daria Grandinetti** and **Geraldine Chaplin.**

"Antwone Fisher" by **Denzel Washington.** Yes, the movies' top black star has directed his first film, and it's about a young sailor (**Derek Luke**) who is helped by a psychiatrist (Washington) to confront his past traumas, which include being abused as a child.

Concern over commercials aimed at young drinkers

RECENTLY, we worried in this space that young Filipino viewers were being exposed to TV commercials that seduced them to savor the "joys" of imbibing hard drinks. It turns out that TV observers are also concerned about this seemingly coordinated campaign to develop teens and young adults into a new market for beer, whiskey, liquor, etc.

A study reveals that young viewers are exposed to hundreds of alcohol spots on TV, quite a number of which are shown on programs with strong appeal to teenagers and young adults.

While advertising alone doesn't make young people want to drink, it does influence that decision. It is worrisome not just because it could lead to greater alcoholism among underage drinkers, but could also result in more drinking-related deaths as a result of car crashes, etc.

Young viewers comprise a new huge and very profitable market for alcoholic drinks, but minors who drink are more susceptible than adults to hard drinking's more negative effects. Thus, great care should be exercised in the way that alcohol spots articulate their seductive message.

On local alcohol commercials, the actors start off in a "happy-happy" mood, but it quickly escalates to rowdy, boisterous and downright drunken behavior.

This is clearly excessive because it encourages young viewers to resort to heavy drinking for "*barkada* bonding," social acceptance, being the life of the party, getting over *hiya* to flirt with the opposite sex and to forget problems by going completely blotto.

It's important that drinking not be presented in those hard-sell terms. And alcohol commercials shouldn't be permitted to be shown on youth-oriented shows.

For starters, specifically young actors should not be used in drinking spots, because they make it easy for young viewers to empathize with their heavily seductive situations and youth-directed advertising messages.

If you see drinking commercials on youth-oriented TV programs and they bother you, let the channel airing the shows know how you feel.

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CHITO ROÑO'S
SPIRIT WARRIORS
The ShortCut
follow me.
A MAQ AND ROADRUNNER PRESENTATION

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MULTI AWARDED ENTRY OF MMFF 2002
BEST PICTURE
BEST ACTOR
BEST ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SCREENPLAY
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
BEST EDITING
BEST MUSICAL SCORE

MANO PO
A FILM BY JOEL LAMANGAN
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC. PRESENTATION
LEONARDO
Bags

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HOME ALONE THE RIVER GP 12:50,3:05,5:20, 7:35,9:50	SPIRIT WARRIORS GP 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	DEKADA 70 P13 11:30,2:05,4:50, 7:35,10:20
MANO PO GP 1:10,3:40, 6:20,9:00	LASTIKMAN GP 12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40	MANO PO GP 11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:20

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
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11:00, 1:45, 4:25,
7:05, 9:50
PG-13

CINEMA 2
MANO PO
11:05, 1:50, 4:35,
7:20, 10:00
GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM

JAN 10, 2003	BANDS	8:00 PM
JAN 16, 2003	PARLIAMENT SYNDICATE	9:00 PM

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NOW SHOWING
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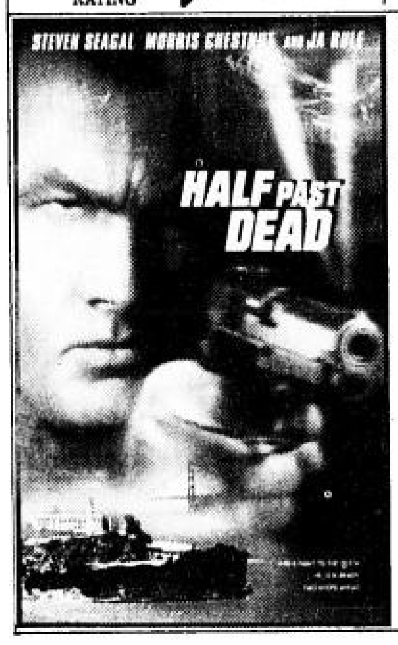
MTRCB RATING GP GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED
ANG BAGONG SUPERHERO NG BAYAN!
DONITA ROSE * JEFFREY QUIZON and MICHAEL V.
MICHELLE BAYLE * RYAN EIGENMANN *ANNE CURTIS
Introducing
OYO BOY SOTTO

VIC SOTTO
as
Lastikman
Created by Mars Ravelo
Directed by
TONY Y. REYES
www.lastikman.com
An OCTOARTS FILMS and M-ZET Production Presentation
Lux
DOLBY

MTRCB RATING PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


STEVEN SEAGAL MORRIS CHESTNUT and JA RULE
HALF PAST DEAD

Special New Year Presentation!

Steven Seagal back in Action

International action superstar Steven Seagal is back with a vengeance. This time he plays undercover FBI agent Sascha Petrosevitch in the brand-new non-stop, slam-bang action blockbuster from Columbia Pictures, "Half Past Dead."

The California Penal Authority has reopened Alcatraz, the most notorious prison in history. A disgruntled prison bureaucrat-turned-criminal mastermind heads a renegade commando team to infiltrate the high-tech fortress in order to force a death-row inmate to reveal the whereabouts of $200 million worth of gold.

Seagal teams with rap artist Ja Rule to rally the Alcatraz inmates to stop the invaders – before they murder the Supreme Court Justice, who is in The Rock to witness an execution.

The fast-paced, action-packed thriller also stars sexy Filipino Hollywood actress Nia Peeples as a deadly gun-firing, knife-throwing martial artist.

OPENS JANUARY 11

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THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS
ADVANCE MIDNIGHT SCREENING
GLORIETTA 4
GREENBELT 3
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
JANUARY 11 - 12:01 AM
Hurry! Buy your tickets now!
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage
AYALA CINEMAS

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
Ali 2	AGIMAT NI LOLO
Ali 3	MANO PO
Ali 4	LASTIKMAN
Ali 5	DEKADA '70
Ali 6	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
Ali 7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	LASTIKMAN
Farmers 2	AGIMAT NI LOLO
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JAN 11	ANAK LAUNCH
JAN 13 & 15	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
JAN 21, 22, & 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN. 7	10 AM / 3 PM / 5 PM
JAN. 8	10 AM / 3 PM / 5 PM
JAN.9	3 PM / 5 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	TWO TIMER/ SEX FILES
ODEON	LASTIKMAN
ODEON-2	PROSTI/ HIYAS NG PARAISO
ROBEN	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	KILABOT AT KEMBOT · RED DIARY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
QUEZON-1	LASTIKMAN
REMAR	LASTIKMAN
REMAR-2	AGIMAT
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-2	REPLI-KATE
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HULA MO, HULI KO
CINEMA-2	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-6	MANO PO
CINEMA-7	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
CINEMA-8	LAPU LAPU
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MANO PO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-12	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
CINEMA-14	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-15	DEKADA 70
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

For sreening times, call 729-7777.
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 DEKADA '70	1 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2	1 LASTIKMAN	DEKADA '70 12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40, 11:20	1 MANO PO
2 LASTIKMAN	2 LASTIKMAN	2 MANO PO	MANO PO 12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40, 11:20	2 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
3 ANG AGIMAT	3 DEKADA '70 12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30	Onstage JOSE MARI CHAN - HEART OF A SONG WRITER Jan. 17 - 18 / 9PM	LASTIKMAN 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	3 DEKADA '70
4 MANO PO	4 ANG ALAMAT NG LAWIN		4 ANG AGIMAT 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25, 11:30	4 AGIMAT
	5 ANG AGIMAT		SPIRIT WARRIORS 2 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	5 LASTIKMAN
	6 MANO PO			
	7 HOME ALONE DA RIBER			

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com

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MOVIE GUIDE
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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	MANO PO
2 (SDDS)	AGIMAT
3 (DTS)	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORCUT
4 GOLD (DTS ES)	MANO PO
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	LASTIKMAN
8	LASTIKMAN
9	DEKADA '70
10	HOME ALONG D RIVER

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	LASTIKMAN
2	HOME ALONG D RIVER
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	DEKADA '70
5	AGIMAT
6 (DTS)	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORCUT
Golden Pearl THX	MANO PO

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	LASTIKMAN
2	DEKADA '70
3	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2	MANO PO
3	AGIMAT
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
5	LASTIKMAN

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	HULI MO HULI KO
2	HOME ALONG D RIVER
3	LASTIKMAN
4	AGIMAT
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	LASTIKMAN
2	MANO PO

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

RESERVE

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	DEKADA '70
2	AGIMAT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	AGIMAT
3	MANO PO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	LASTIKMAN
2	DEKADA '70
3	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
4	MANI PO

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	MANO PO
4	HULA MO HULI KO
5	AGIMAT
6	DEKADA '70
7 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
8 (SDDS)	HOME ALONG
9	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	AGIMAT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	HOME ALONG D RIBER
4 (SDDS)	DEKADA '70
5	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
6 (DOLBY)	LASTIKMAN
7 (DTS)	MANO PO
8	HULI MO HULI KO
9	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	MANO PO
2 (SDDS)	AGIMAT
3	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4 (DOLBY)	LASTIKMAN
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	LASTIKMAN
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DTS)	HOME ALONG D RIVER
4	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5 (SDDS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
Lords	AGIMAT
Jennet	MANO PO

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	LASTIKMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
3	HOME ALONG D RIVER
4	MANO PO

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
2	MANO PO
3	LASTIKMAN
4	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	AGIMAT
2	HOME ALONG D' RIBER

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	LASTIKMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
2	AGIMAT
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MANO PO
4 (SDDS)	LASTIKMAN
5 (DTS)	DEKADA '70
6	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	LASTIKMAN
2	AGIMAT

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 ; 534.2198

1	LASTIKMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
3 (DTS)	MANO PO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MANO PO
2 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY)	DEKADA '70
4	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	MANO PO
2 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
3 (DTS)	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORCUT
4	LASTIKMAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	MANO PO
2	LASTIKMAN
3	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2	LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
4 (DTS)	MANO PO

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2	AGIMAT
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	LASTIKMAN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	HOME ALONG D RIBER
2	AGIMAT
3 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
4	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5	HULI MO HULI KO

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	HOME ALONG D RIBER

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	HOME ALONG D RIBER
2	LASTIKMAN
3	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	AGIMAT
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	MANO PO
2	AGIMAT
3	DEKADA '70
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	AGIMAT
2	MANO PO
3 (DTS ES)	DEKADA '70
4	SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	MANO PO
3 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
4 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

THE STREETBOYS
CHITO RONO'S
SPIRIT WARRIORS
The ShortCut

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4	MANO PO
5	AGIMAT
6	LASTIKMAN
7	DEKADA '70
8	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	LASTIKMAN
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
6	HULA MO, HULI KO
7	AGIMAT
8	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	DEKADA '70
3	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
4	AGIMAT
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
6	LASTIKMAN
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8	LASTIKMAN
9	MANO PO
10	LAPU LAPU
11	LASTIKMAN
12	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	MANO PO
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	LASTIKMAN
5	DEKADA '70
6	AGIMAT
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
8	LAPU LAPU
9	LASTIKMAN
10	HULA MO, HULI KO
11	MANO PO
12	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	MANO PO
2	AGIMAT
3	LASTIKMAN
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6	LAPU LAPU
7	HULA MO, HULI KO
8	MANO PO
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
11	DEKADA '70
12	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	DEKADA '70
5	MANO PO
6	LASTIKMAN
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8	AGIMAT

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
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4	LASTIKMAN
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
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7	MANO PO
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY CEBU
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1	MANO PO
2	AGIMAT
3	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
4	DEKADA '70
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
8	MANO PO

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1	DEKADA '70
2	CLOSED
3	AGIMAT
4	MANO PO
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7	CLOSED
8	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

SM CITY PAMPANGA
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1	LASTIKMAN
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SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
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1	AGIMAT
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SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
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1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO
4	AGIMAT

SM CITY DAVAO
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2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
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6	AGIMAT

SM BICUTAN

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2	MANO PO
3	LASTIKMAN
4	AGIMAT

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1	AGIMAT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO
4	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

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2	MANO PO 10:50 FS/11:20 MF/2:00/4:40/7:20/ 9:35 LFS/10:00 LMF/12:15 END

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6	DEKADA '70
7	LAPU-LAPU
8	LASTIKMAN
9	DEKADA '70
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5	MANO PO
6	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
7	LASTIKMAN

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1	AGIMAT
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
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4	DEKADA '70
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1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	DEKADA '70
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6	LASTIKMAN
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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2	LASTIKMAN
3	AGIMAT
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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2	MANO PO
3	DEKADA '70
4	AGIMAT
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	MANO PO
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	DEKADA '70
6	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

Sta. Rosa Laguna

1	LASTIKMAN
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	DEKADA '70
4	AGIMAT
5	MANO PO

Bacolod
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1	LIKE MIKE
2	DEKADA 70
3	LASTIKMAN
4	MANO PO
5	HOME ALONG THE RIBER
6	AGIMAT

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1	AGIMAT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	DEKADA '70
5	DIE ANOTHER DAY/HOME ALONG THE RIBER
6	MANO PO

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Eminem scores bestseller with controversial album

DOUBLE TRIUMPH. Grammy Award-winning rapper Eminem dominates the charts with solo album and movie debut soundtrack.

LOS ANGELES—Slumping music sales left the recording industry with a whopping New Year's hangover, but rap star Eminem has plenty to celebrate.

In a year that saw CD sales overall plunge by nearly nine percent, the Detroit-based rapper-turned-actor sold 7.6 million copies of his latest album, "The Eminem Show," making it the biggest commercial hit of 2002, according to year-end retail figures issued Thursday by Nielsen SoundScan.

At the same time, the soundtrack to Eminem's movie debut, "8 Mile," ranked No. 5 for the year with nearly 3.5 million units sold.

Featuring songs from Eminem and other recording artists, "8 Mile" also returned to the top of SoundScan's latest weekly sales chart (ended Dec. 29), dislodging country pop diva Shania Twain from the No. 1 spot for the first time since the debut of her new album "Up!" in late November.

The movie "8 Mile," loosely based on Eminem's life, opened at No. 1 at the US box office in November to generally warm reviews and went on to gross more than $114 million, making the Grammy-winning rapper one of the few recording stars in recent years to successfully cross over to the big screen.

Eminem's double triumph came in a year of music dominated by hip-hop and country music acts, which according to a recent tally by the New York Times jointly accounted for three-fifths of the year's No. 1 rankings on the pop album charts.

Indeed, most of the top 10 albums of 2002 fell into one of those two classes as rap and country encroached further into the pop mainstream. But country music was the only genre to post an increase in sales last year, rising 12 percent over 2001 levels, according to SoundScan.

Industrywide, total album sales fell 8.7 percent from 2001 to nearly 650 million units, the second year-to-year decline in a row.

A slump of nearly nearly three percent the previous year marked the first sales drop in at least a decade. The major labels have blamed the sluggish economy and online music piracy for weak sales.

Eminem was the only artist in 2002 to surpass the 5 million mark. Fellow rap artist Nelly's "Nellyville" release was No. 2 for the year, with sales of 4.9 million copies, followed by the debut album of Canadian teen pop ingenue Avril Lavigne, "Let Go" (BMG Records) at No. 3, with sales of 4.1 million units.

Country pop trio the Dixie Chicks finished the year in fourth place, selling nearly 3.7 million copies of their latest album, "Home."

Rounding out the top 10 were "Missundaztood" from pop-rocker Pink at No. 6, followed by hip-hop songstress Ashanti's self-titled album, country star Alan Jackson's "Drive," Shania Twain's "Up!" and the bluegrass-heavy soundtrack to the film "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

In terms of market share, Universal Music Group, a unit of Vivendi Universal, continued to lead the pack, accounting for nearly 29 percent of total album sales in 2002.

Warner Music, owned by Time Warner Inc., was No. 2 with 15.9 percent market share, followed by Sony Corp's Sony Music Entertainment (15.7 percent), Bertelsmann AG's BMG Records (14.8 percent) and EMI Group (8.4 percent).

Independent labels accounted for the balance.

Reuters

MINUS LUKE. South Border members (from left) bassist Tata Balane, lead and rhythm guitarist Butch Victoriano, keyboardist Jay Durias, lead vocalist Vince Alcaraz, drummer Paul Benitez and saxophonist Ric Junasa.

New vocalist replaces Luke in South Border

By Marinel R. Cruz

IF SOUTH Border musical director and keyboardist Jay Durias would have it his way, he would rather talk about the band's newest member, vocalist Vince Alcaraz, than complain about their former frontman Luke Mejares.

"We don't want him (Luke) to use the issue for his own gain," Jay told the INQUIRER Thursday. "But I guess we cannot keep mum about it, especially now that we are introducing our new vocalist."

Luke formally announced his intention to go solo during his last performance as South Border's lead vocalist in a gig in Marikina City last Dec. 30. Although the singer never really explained why he chose to leave, there is talk that jealousy within the band made him decide to bolt out.

Luke's priorities

The misunderstanding between South Border and Luke began when the latter started accepting offers to become a product endorser. The move, Jay explained, made the band question Luke's priorities.

"For the record, Luke was never forced to quit the band, he was simply forced to make a decision," said Jay. "South Border should have been his No. 1 priority, but it wasn't. He stopped growing with the band.

"We are not against him wanting to earn more money, as long as this does not clash with his role as South Border's vocalist," Jay pointed out.

In fact, Jay said the band would even help Luke with some of his song arrangements whenever the latter was invited to sing solo in some shows.

"Gigs like that help promote South Border, too," Jay said.

But the band had to make a decision when Luke insisted on signing an exclusive contract with a sports apparel, despite the group's objection.

"What if other sponsors offered to produce a show for the band, does this mean we would have to say no to it because Luke is under an exclusive contract?," Jay pointed out.

"When we told Luke about this, he refused to listen and said that we were simply jealous of him. That was when he told us he'd leave the band."

South Border spotted Luke at a resto-bar in Makati four years ago, while looking for a replacement for their original vocalist Brix Ferraris, who also left the band under unpleasant circumstances and tried to go solo.

Buy-out

"Luke was then a member of a group called Red Line. We had to buy him out of his contract with the band for P800,000," Jay disclosed. "(South Border) still owes money to Sony Music, which shouldered Luke's buy-out at that time."

Adjusting to a new vocalist was not easy for the band members, attested Jay. When they got Luke, they had to help him reconcile his singing style with South Border's kind of music.

"That is why we're really spending time with our new singer now," Jay said. "Even though it feels as if we're back to square one, we're very optimistic that something good will come out of this. Vince has a heart of a true musician."

> 'South Border will still be South Border as long as there are people willing to support us'
>
> —Jay Durias

Vince Alcaraz, 23, who was a former member of La Salle's musical group Kundirana, used to be part of the three-man R&B act called Into Deep.

When Into Deep disbanded after two years, Vince was so disheartened that he wanted nothing out of music anymore.

Abandoned

"Our record company promised us a recording contract but abandoned us after a year," Vince shared.

He was seriously considering quitting the music scene and pursuing a career in advertising, when the offer to become South Border's vocalist came.

Vince had stopped attending school at the College of St. Benilde in Manila and worked as a crew in a coffee shop to make both ends meet.

"A common friend invited me to jam with South Border at a gig in Quezon City sometime last September. It honestly didn't feel like an audition," recalled Vince. "After I sang one song, I had a casual talk with the band members and we hit if off right away. That was it!"

Jay said they became interested with Vince's talent when the latter collaborated with rapper Chill some three years ago. Vince wrote with Chill the song "Freakiness" and joined her in most of her promotional tours.

"When we first heard Vince sing, all of us agreed that he is good," Jay said. "We just didn't really pay much attention to him because we were so focused with Luke as our frontman."

Vince is busy preparing for his first official South Border gig on Jan. 8 at Suburbia in Malate. He said he has been receiving a lot of encouragement from the guys, especially from Jay.

Vince is now working on improving the volume of his voice.

Undaunted

"I'm used to singing with a minus one tape and not with a live band," he admitted. "I still have a lot to learn."

Jay said South Border remains undaunted by the controversies that have come their way.

"Our only fault was that we gave too much of ourselves," he added.

The group plans to continue making good music and creating more albums in 2003.

"South Border will still be South Border as long as there are people who are willing to support us. Music has always been the group's driving force," Jay said.

South Border performs every Wednesday at Suburbia in Malate and every Thursday at Dish at the Power Plant Mall in Makati. Catch them at La Consolacion College in Manila on Jan. 17 and in Urdaneta, Pangasinan, on Jan. 18.

GOING SOLO. Former South Border front liner Luke Mejares.

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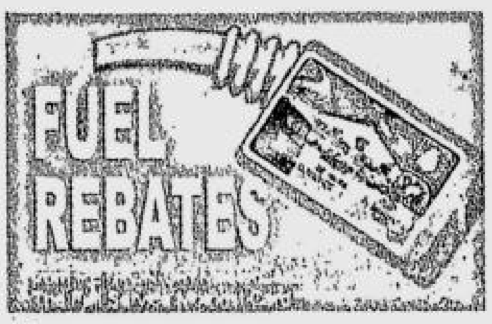

TUESDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2003

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HIGHER RATE FOR '03

Dec. inflation rises to 2.6%

By Doris C. Dumlao

HIGHER fuel prices and utility rates, the depreciation of the peso and stronger consumer spending during the Christmas season pushed the country's inflation rate in December up to 2.6 percent from the 15-year low of 2.5 percent in November.

This brought the Philippine inflation rate for 2002 to 3.1 percent, still lower than the government's target range of 4.5 to 5.5 percent.

The bottoming out, however, was contrary to the expectations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas that the inflation rate would continue its downtrend in December.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who had projected the December inflation at 2.1 to 2.4 percent, said there would be no change in the BSP's overnight policy interest rates since the rate during the month was within expectations. "This is within expectation and has already been factored in, so no reaction (in terms of monetary policy) is required," he said.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri yesterday said the country's inflation was expected to follow an upward trend in the coming months due to external developments and the possible recurrence of the El Niño dryspell.

Buenaventura said the first half of the year would be a very challenging period for the country's economic managers due to the combined pressure from the brewing US-Iraq conflict, the drought and the budget deficit.

"If the first half would not be worse than expected and if inflation would range between 4 and 5 percent, then we have a good chance of keeping our policy rates neutral for the rest of the year," he said.

But if the situation turns out to be worse than expected in the first half, the policy-making Monetary Board may have to adjust the overnight "tiering" first before making any change in the policy rates.

However, Neri said the possible impact of the tension between the United States and Iraq on fuel prices and on demand for foreign exchange was already factored in the government's inflation target of 4.5 percent to 5.5 percent for this year.

The National Statistics Office yesterday said the slight uptick in December was brought about by the acceleration in the indices for: food, beverage and tobacco, to 1.6 percent from 1.4 percent; clothing, to 2.4 percent from 2.2 percent; fuel, light and water, to 2.6 percent from 1.5 percent and, services, to 5.5 percent from 5.1 percent.

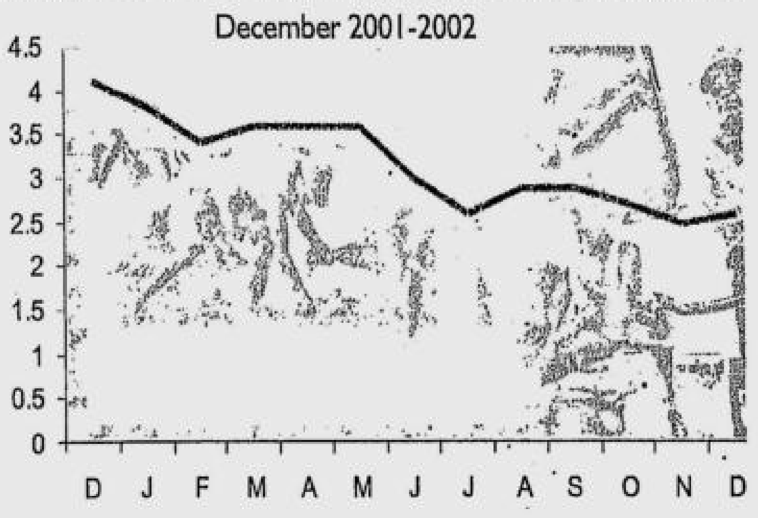
The inflation rate for housing and repairs slid to 3.6 percent from 4 percent while the miscellaneous group retained the previous month's rate of 1.6 percent.

Neri noted that the inflation rise in December emanated from the National Capital Region with a rate of 2.9 percent as against 2.1 percent in November. The rate in areas outside the NCR was unchanged at 2.6 percent.

"Prices of food rose at a slightly faster pace of 1.6 percent in December compared with 1.2 percent in November despite the slowdown in rice inflation," Neri said.

DEC. INFLATION/ B2

INFLATION RATE



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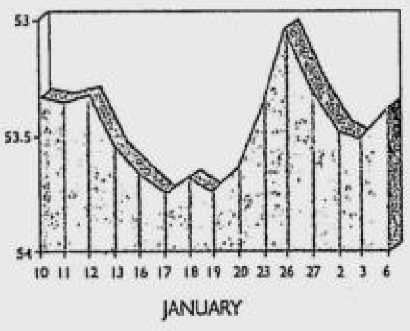

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As of 9 a.m., Jan. 6, 2003

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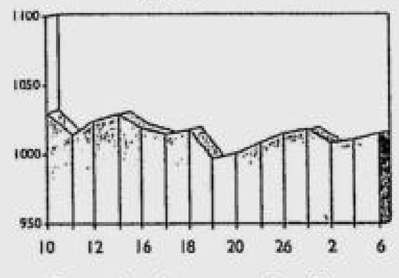
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 6, 2003

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

JANUARY



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares up

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange composite index gained 3.57 points to 1,015.07.

"If you look at current prices, there are a lot of issues at oversold levels," Gene Gabriel of ATR Kim-Eng Securities said.

"And there's also some catching up to do. We're valuing stocks now based on earnings prospects for 2003," he added.

Investors, however, remained cautious amid tensions in the Middle East ahead of a possible US military strike against Iraq.

Turnover was higher at 126.3 million shares but value fell to P268.3 million from 81.70 million shares worth P481.02 million on Friday.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. rose P12.50 to P282.50 after the labor department ordered striking workers to return to work.

Manila Electric Co. A shares were unchanged at P8.80 while B shares rose 25 centavos to P10.25. Ayala Land Inc. added 5 centavos to P4.50 while parent Ayala Corp. shed 15 centavos to P4.25. *AFP*

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LOWER INTEREST RATES

Gov't plans to raise more funds from local sources

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BENCHMARK 91-day treasury bill rate slid 4.3 basis points to 5.121 percent in yesterday's auction, slightly reducing the cost of the government's local borrowings.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the decline in local interest rates would likely be sustained in the first quarter as the financial markets were seen to remain liquid

"The government is the only game in town so we expect funds to be placed in treasury bills and bonds," said Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

Buenaventura said the government would take advantage of this liquidity to raise sufficient funds to cover an estimated P202-billion budget deficit this year.

Edeza said the government would line up for sale at least P10 billion worth of five-year retail treasury bonds in the first quarter along with P3 billion worth of three-year dollar-linked bonds this month. He said 10- and 20-year bonds would also be sold within the first three months of the year.

"We will maximize the sale of retail bonds to as much as what the market can absorb. Aside from raising funds, we also want to enable more retail investors to participate and take advantage of the risk-free investment," said the treasurer.

Yesterday, the yields of 182-day and 364-day treasury bills also fell by 14.7 basis points and by 17.5 basis points to 6.42 percent and 7.196 percent, respectively.

The government raised P4 billion from the 91-day bills; P3 billion from the six-month debt papers, and P2.5 billion from the one-year treasury bills, out of offers that amounted to P17.192 billion.

Edeza said the market was awash with carry over interest payments from the government. On the average, the state pays investors, mostly banks, combined interests amounting to P140 billion for its local borrowings.

"We have a wellspring of liquidity to draw from. We will take advantage of this liquidity and make sure we maximize our strategies to keep the market attracted to government securities this year," said the treasurer.

One strategy, said the treasurer, would be to cancel local fund-raising activities in December when liquidity was normally tight. "We will end our borrowings in November to make sure that at the start of the year, we have enough appetite for government securities," he added.

Edeza said the government would try to be more opportunistic particularly with its domestic borrowings this year, considering that the bulk of the deficit-financing requirement would be raised from the local market.

This year, the government needs to raise P198.551 billion to finance an estimated deficit of P202 billion.

Bayantel, Hutchinson introduce video-conferencing service for OFWs

By Abigail L. Ho

LOPEZ-OWNED Bayan Telecommunications Inc. has partnered with Hong Kong-based Hutchinson Global Communications for a video-conferencing service designed for families of overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong.

The recently launched service, dubbed Video Tawag, would allow OFWs in Hong Kong to not only speak with their families and friends here but also see them through video-conferencing facilities installed in various public calling offices here and in Hong Kong.

In Hong Kong, the service is called Face to Face Kisses, an extension of the Kisses international pay phone cards that Hutchinson launched for OFWs there.

"We strongly believe that Video Tawag will attract Filipinos living in Hong Kong who wish to maintain strong ties with their families in the Philippines," BayanTel vice president for international business Sherry Ann Supelana said in a statement issued yesterday.

"At the same time, BayanTel stands to gain immense value from the partnership with a major regional telecom player such as Hutchinson to further strengthen the BayanTel brand among OFWs and their families in the Philippines," she added.

The new service was launched on Dec. 29 last year.

Video Tawag is available at the public calling offices of BayanTel affiliate Radio Communications Philippines Inc. (RCPI) in Quezon City, Angeles City in Pampanga, Tarlac, Cabanatuan, Dagupan and Vigan in Ilocos Norte.

Financing firm lists shares on PSE

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange marked its first full week of trading this year with the listing of Makati Finance Corp., a unit of Amalgamated Investment Bancorporation.

MFC became the 237th firm to enter the PSE's roster of listed companies and the second to list on the Small and Medium Enterprise Board. Its shares rose by almost 9 percent yesterday from the offer price of P1.38 to P1.50 per share.

"We at the exchange are confident that the market is off to a good start having MFC as the first listing of the year," PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco said.

MFC president Max Borromeo said the company was unfazed by the listless trading activity, saying that the best time to list was during market downturns.

Confident of the company's strong fundamentals, he believed that going against the trend would bring about better opportunities for the company.

"As a listed company, we'll become known publicly and we can invite new investors to join and expand the company because we're always on the lookout for strategic partners or mergers to make the company a little bit bigger than what it is today. So hopefully, we can graduate from the SME board to the big board," Borromeo told reporters after the ceremonial ringing of the bell to welcome MFC.

MFC is currently engaged in consumer lending to medical professionals (Rx Cashline) as well as handling of receivables of small service companies (MFC Factors).

Through prudent lending, Borromeo said MFC has managed to contain its non-performing loan ratio to less than 3 percent of total loan portfolio.

MFC sold 19.56 million common shares or 26 percent of total issued and outstanding stock at an initial public offering price of P1.38. Its shares closed at P1.50 yesterday on a volume turnover of 40,000.

MFC would use part of the P23.44 million in proceeds from the offering to pay off part of its loans and finance further lending activities.

DTI to develop new export products in '03

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ROXAS

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry (DTI) will continue to develop second-line export products this year to sustain the robust growth of the country's exports.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said Category II export products—such as gifts and houseware, furniture, construction materials, food and marine products—were more immune to global trends and would therefore present a more stable source of export growth for the country.

"These products depend less on what the multinational corporations decide and more on government efforts to improve their operations and open up market opportunities," Roxas said.

Roxas said the second-line export products were likely to carry the load of export growth this year considering the gloomy sales outlook for the main or Category I export products—such as electronics and semiconductors, garments and automotive parts.

The DTI expects export growth to slow down to between zero and 5 percent this year after hitting more than 9 percent last year due to uncertainty over the effect of an imminent US war on Iraq in the first quarter.

Roxas said he was impressed with the strong performance of Category II products which grew more than 10 percent in the first 11 months last year.

He said this was why the DTI would continue adopting programs that would spur the growth of small and medium enterprises that comprise the bulk of the manufacturers of Category II export products.

"The SME sector will still be the main priority sector of the government because we have more control of this sector's performance than the front-line export products."

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, January 6, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	7,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	33.5	35	33.5	35	2,663,100
China Banking Corp.	635	635	635	635	500
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26.5	26	26.5	24,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	30.5	31	189,500
Philippine National Bank	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	35,600
Phil. Savings Bank	25	25	25	25	100
Security Bank Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	1,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	1,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	150,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1205	1220	1205	1220	1,730
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	180,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	910	920	910	915	940
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	15.75	15.75	14.5	14.75	30,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	300,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	447.5	447.5	445	445	29,790
Ipeople Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	20,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	7,300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	1,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	8,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.2	0.215	0.2	0.215	380,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	275	282.5	275	282.5	43,380
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	5,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.9	9.2	8.8	8.8	825,000
Manila Electric Co. B	10.25	10.75	10.25	10.25	3,943,000
Petron Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.52	1.54	241,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	50,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.44	2.46	2.44	2.46	339,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	500,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	2,990,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18	18	17	17	40,800
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	35	35	35	35	88,000
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	150,000
San Miguel Corp. A	59	59.5	59	59	22,500
San Miguel Corp. B	65	65.5	65	65.5	103,600
Universal Robina Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.25	4.25	389,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	541,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.155	0.145	0.145	8,420,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	100,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	9.1	9.7	9.1	9.3	788,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	1,042,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	800,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	2,780,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	110,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	310,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	32,000
Pryce Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	2,000,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	13,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	100,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.24	0.28	0.24	0.28	530,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	3,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	15.5	15.5	14.5	14.5	172,200
Jollibee Warrants	•17	17	17	17	20,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.5	4.55	4.5	4.5	2,932,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	180,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	10,000
SM Development Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	36,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.5	4.55	4.45	4.55	8,750,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	5,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	4,700,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.21	0.215	0.2	0.215	9,740,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	1,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0026	0.003	0.0026	0.003	22,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	6,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,350,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,500,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0022	0.0024	0.0022	0.0024	16,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	200,000

CURRENCIES

Jan. 06, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency In Peso
United States	Dollar	0.959233	1.000000	53.506000
Japan	Yen	0.008015	0.008356	0.447100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.544365	1.610000	86.144700
Hongkong	Dollar	0.123000	0.128228	6.861000
Switzerland	Franc	0.686196	0.715359	38.276000
Canada	Dollar	0.613673	0.639754	34.230700
Singapore	Dollar	0.550240	0.573625	30.692400
Australia	Dollar	0.541572	0.564589	30.208900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.544586	2.652731	141.937000
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.255796	0.266667	14.268300
Brunei	Dollar	0.548603	0.571919	30.601100
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022313	0.023261	1.244600
UAE	Dirham	0.261165	0.272264	14.567800
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.042500	55.780000
Argentina	Peso	0.288926	0.301205	16.116300
Brazil	Real	0.278038	0.289855	15.509000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134580	0.140300	7.506900
India	Rupee	0.020013	0.020864	1.116300
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.252463	0.263193	14.082400
Mexico	New Peso	0.092314	0.096237	5.149300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.502927	0.524301	28.053200
Norway	Kroner	0.138097	0.143966	7.703000
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016535	0.017238	0.922300
South Africa	Rand	0.113964	0.118807	6.356900
Korea	Won	0.000802	0.000836	0.044700
Sweden	Kroner	0.109965	0.114638	6.133800
Syria	Pound	0.018625	0.019417	1.038900
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.027676	0.028852	1.543800
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000683	0.000712	0.038100

DISCLOSURES

INTPERPHIL Laboratories Inc. bought 2,000 ILI shares and 65,000 ILIB shares on Jan. 3 in line with its share buyback program.

* * *

SPI Technologies Inc. advised that a total of 8,617 common shares have been availed of and fully paid by the options under ESOP 2. The listing of the said shares is set for Jan. 7. This brings the number of common shares listed under ESOP 2 to a total of 562,825 common shares.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings purchased 1.5 million treasury shares at P4.40 per share on Jan. 3.

* * *

ASIAN Terminals Inc. appointed **Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.** as its new stock transfer agent effective Jan. 6. *Compiled by Armin Adina, PDI Research*

Dec. inflation rises to 2.6%

From page B1

"The holiday season brought stronger demand for most food items and this was seen in products such as seafoods, selected fruits, vegetables, spices and seasonings, flour, bread and biscuits," ATR Kim Eng Securities economist Luz Lorenzo said.

Lorenzo said a similar seasonal demand seemed to have affected clothing.

"In the utilities index, the peso depreciation increased electricity rates through the automatic exchange rate adjustment mechanism. Plus, there were also price increases in fuels such as kerosene and liquefied petroleum gas. All these had knock-on effects on services," she explained.

On a month-on-month basis, the inflation rate rose to 0.4 percent in December from 0.1 percent in November.

Aside from external developments, Neri acknowledged that a possible recurrence of the El Niño dryspell, which could affect agricultural output, was another threat to inflation in the coming months.

For her part, Lorenzo said interest rates were expected to stay low for now but would pick up later to average at 4.3 percent this year as the US-led war against Iraq loomed.

"The benchmark 91-day Treasury bill which averaged 5.5 percent in 2002, within our expectations and at least a 30-year low, is expected to average 7.3 percent this year," Lorenzo said. *with reports from Clarissa S.Batino and Reuters*

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Manila Golf (Corp.) — 10.5M
Manila Polo — 2.5M
Manila Southwoods "A"/B — Please call
Makati Sports "A" — 245.300
Subic Yacht (Indiv.)/Corp — 120/240
Tagaytay Highland Club/Golf — 340/620
Tagaytay Midland — 720
Valley Golf — 300,000
Wack Wack — 6M

BUYING
Alabang A/B — 1.3M
Baguio Country Club — 600,000
Calatagan A — 70,000
Camp John Hay Golf — 210,000
Canlubang Golf — 450,000
Capitol Hills — 100,000
Manila Golf (Indiv.)/Corp — 10.2M/10.5M
Manila Polo — 2.450M
Manila Southwoods A/B — 450/510,000
Makati Sports "A" — 240,000
Mimosa Indiv/Corp — 115/275
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Tagaytay Midland — 700
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2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,500,000	1,350,000
3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	650,000	600,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	80,000	
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	280,000	220,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	550,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	100,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	180,000	170,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	380,000	
10. CLUB FILIPINO	190,000	140,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	300,000	
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	350,000	
17. LUISITA GOLF CLUB	350,000	
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	250,000	230,000
19. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	270,000	250,000
20. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	10,500,000
21. MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP.)	13,000,000	
22. MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,400,000
23. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	580,000	500,000
24. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	600,000	
25. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	100,000	
26. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	100,000
27. MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" "B" "C"	Pls. call	Pls. call
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	220,000	200,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	210,000	
32. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	350,000	300,000
33. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,050,000	
34. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND.)	200,000	
35. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	850,000	775,000
36. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	750,000	700,000
37. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000	150,000
38. VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		310,000
39. WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	6,500,000	6,300,000

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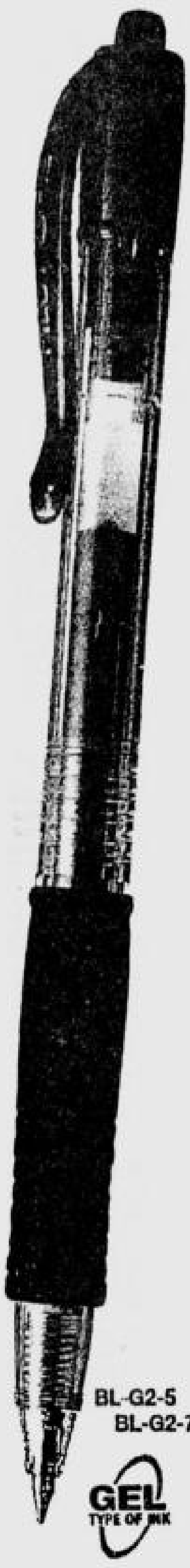

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Gov't sets 2003's first foreign bond float to ease war worries

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is looking at launching its first global bond deal for 2003 this month, National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said yesterday.

In a news briefing, Edeza said the finance department had yet to decide whether it would tap the Japanese or European bond markets for its first overseas borrowing this year.

Edeza disclosed that the finance department was still waiting for President Macapagal-Arroyo to clear this month's fund-raising plan.

"We are seriously looking at the yen and euro currencies as an option. Last year, we have no borrowing in euro currency, so maybe we can do it this year," Edeza told reporters.

He said the most that the government could raise from the two currencies would be $500 million each because the two markets were not as liquid as the global bond market.

The Macapagal administration is hoping to raise at least $2 billion for the government's funding requirements this year.

A high-ranking government source said the government wanted to tap the global bond market early as a precautionary move to secure funding should war erupt in the Middle East.

The government, which has projected net foreign borrowings at P95.281 billion this year, is expected to seek approval for the bond deal from the central bank's Monetary Board this week.

The source, while declining to indicate the size of the issue, said it would likely be a global offering since the Philippines still had a shelf registration with the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

With $970 million in available registration in the global bond market, the United States market remains the most attractive place to raise funds.

The government, struggling with a budget deficit problem, is now working on its financing requirements for 2003. It aims to cap this year's budget shortfall at P202 billion, or 4.7 percent of gross domestic product.

The government has said it will borrow more locally this year to cut its exposure to global market volatility.

It projected net domestic borrowings for 2003 at P103.27 billion.

The national government last tapped the yen market for $450 million worth of 10-year money in December 2001, while the euro market gave state-run National Power Corp. about $450 million worth of five-year funds in November.

Gov't finalizing terms of Clean Air loans

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources and the Land Transportation Office are finalizing the terms of a financing scheme that will help public transport groups comply with new emission standards under Republic Act 8749, or the Clean Air Act of 1999.

After an initial meeting on Friday, Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun met again yesterday with officials of the Development Bank of the Philippines to work out the details of the financing scheme that would cover buses, jeepneys and even tricycles.

In an earlier interview, Gozun said this financing scheme was on top of the P1-million grant that President Macapagal-Arroyo gave the Tricycle Operators and Drivers Associations-Pilipinas on Friday to help it establish its own emission-testing center as well as to provide it with some working capital.

Upon approval, the financing scheme will give transport groups a chance to borrow money that they can use in making their members' public utility vehicles compliant with new emission standards under the Clean Air Act.

Gozun said the amount that a transport group could borrow would vary depending on what sort of repair its vehicles would need to be fully compliant.

Abigail L. Ho

ICTSI closes Laguna depot due to huge losses

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. announced yesterday that it would permanently close down early next month its rail-serviced inland container depot in Calamba, Laguna because of the project's continued losses.

In a statement, ICTSI said the depot's assets, including the train and rail cars, would be decommissioned, but the company would continue to maintain the 20-hectare ICD Laguna property.

ICTSI explained that it decided to shut down the Laguna depot because the facility had been incurring losses since it began operations in 1998.

The losses were despite an effort to minimize overhead costs by merging ICX Corp., which formerly ran the depot, with ICTSI.

ICD was the only alternative land access to the port of Manila.

ICTSI attributed the continued losses to several factors.

For one, industrial growth in the Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon growth area, ICD's main market, had not been as fast as anticipated, with investments and trade volume in the area slowing down in the past four years.

Moreover, poorly maintained railways and bridges forced the train to slow down for safety, preventing the fielding of more trips and consequently raising the cost of every trip.

Lastly, the train service was unable to compete with truck hauling services, the rates of which had fallen also as a result of the low demand for the service.

CAP has enough cash reserves, SEC determines

By Elena R. Torrijos

COLLEGE Assurance Plan Philippines Inc., the country's largest pre-need company, now has enough cash reserves to meet the government's minimum requirement, according to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

CAP has complied with the SEC's 10-percent liquidity reserve requirement, documents released yesterday showed.

In a news briefing, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said securities regulators decided to consider CAP's $50 million worth of Metro Rail Transit bonds as compliance with the liquidity reserve requirement.

"(The MRT bonds) can fall under the liquid assets, so they (CAP) are no longer short of liquid reserve requirement," Bautista told reporters.

She clarified, however, that CAP had yet to deal with its trust fund deficiency.

"We will see in January," she said.

The SEC earlier ordered CAP to liquefy assets after a review showed that as of Aug. 30 last year, CAP was P95 million short of meeting the liquidity requirement.

The commission's non-traditional securities and instruments department, at the time, believed that the MRT bonds should not be classified as liquid assets.

CAP managed to convince regulators that the bonds could be traded and could, therefore, be considered as liquid assets.

Under the SEC's rules, at least 10 percent of a pre-need company's trust fund should consist of liquid assets.

The SEC has also ordered CAP to submit on Jan. 31 an actuarial valuation report that it will use to determine whether the pre-need firm has a trust fund deficiency.

The commission has approved CAP's proposal to provide loans to qualified, fully paid, non-availing planholders.

Planholders who qualify include those whose plans will not mature in less than 15 months from the day they applied.

The loan amount will not be more than 80 percent of the termination value.

Record Dec. collections prop up BOC take in 2002

THE BUREAU of Customs rode the wave of a record revenue take in December to close the year with total collections of P96.83 billion, surpassing the previous year's take by more than P600 million.

The 2002 collection figure was also within 2.8 percent of the customs bureau's revenue target of P99.5 billion.

Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo announced that the preliminary December 2002 collection figure totaled P10.8 billion, 14 percent over its monthly collection target of P9.47 billion.

The figure was also 40 percent higher than the December 2001 collection.

The December collection allowed the bureau to cut its collection deficit to a modest 2.8 percent despite struggling with a slowdown in importation and the easing of tariffs on many import items.

On a monthly average, the customs bureau posted an increasing revenue collection, from an average of P6.9 billion a month in the first quarter, P7.9 billion a month in the second quarter, P8.4 billion a month in the third quarter and P9 billion a month in the last quarter.

"The economic slowdown in world markets and the effects of trade liberalization had a strong negative impact on customs revenues. We are taking these realities into consideration, but we are also looking at the situation as an opportunity to implement reforms that will benefit the economy in the medium- to long-term," Bernardo said.

He explained that the bureau was strengthening its capability as a trade facilitation agency that will be more attuned to the needs of businessmen.

"We believe this is a very tangible way of boosting the economy, by making it easier for businessmen to do business," Bernardo said.

To this end, the customs chief said he was pursuing a more aggressive campaign to plug collection loopholes primarily through stricter monitoring rules, a more vigorous anti-smuggling campaign and further streamlining of customs procedures.

Gov't to broaden parallel drug importation program

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE TRADE and health departments are set to broaden the government's parallel drug importation program following the United States' decision to suspend restrictions on the trade of patented drugs to countries facing grave public health crises.

"The US initiative may provide a short-term solution to a very complex problem and complement the government program to provide cheap essential medicines to a majority of Filipinos," Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said.

Roxas said US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick informed him that Washington had pledged to initiate a moratorium in the use of the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement mechanism against countries that might issue compulsory licenses to import much-needed pharmaceutical products.

"We have made an additional commitment, effective immediately. The US will not challenge any WTO member that exports such medicine produced under compulsory license to a country in need," Zoellick said.

The US initiative will put into motion the Doha declaration on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights agreement and public health, whose implementation has been stalled due to differences between rich and poor WTO members.

Light railway contractor directly hires workers

TRANSURB—Technirail SA, contractor of the LRT Line 1 maintenance system, has terminated its manpower supply contract with Genial Trading and Contracting Co., a local manpower supply agency, paving the way for the direct employment of trained and qualified workers into the company.

"Our foremost responsibility is the riding public who should enjoy the benefits of a safe and reliable light rail transit system," Transurb-Technirail country manager Dan Stephen Palami said.

This, he said, could only be made possible by directly employing and protecting highly skilled and motivated workers.

The previous system of engaging a manpower supply contractor was critically reviewed and determined to be disadvantageous after management received persistent complaints from workers of non-payment of fringe benefits as well as salary scalping allegedly being practiced by the contracted manpower agency.

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Construction Project Time Management	Feb. 26-27
Const. Project Contract & Risk Management	Mar. 13-14
Const. Project Environmental & Safety Mgmt.	Mar. 26-27
Construction Supervisory Training & Seminars	
Construction Safety & Health for Safety Officer (Accredited by the DOLE-Bureau of Working Condition)	Jan. 20-24/ Mar. 17-21
Value Engineering in Construction	Feb. 5
Work Study in Construction	March 5
Productivity and Quality Seminars (Supports the Philippine Quality Award)	
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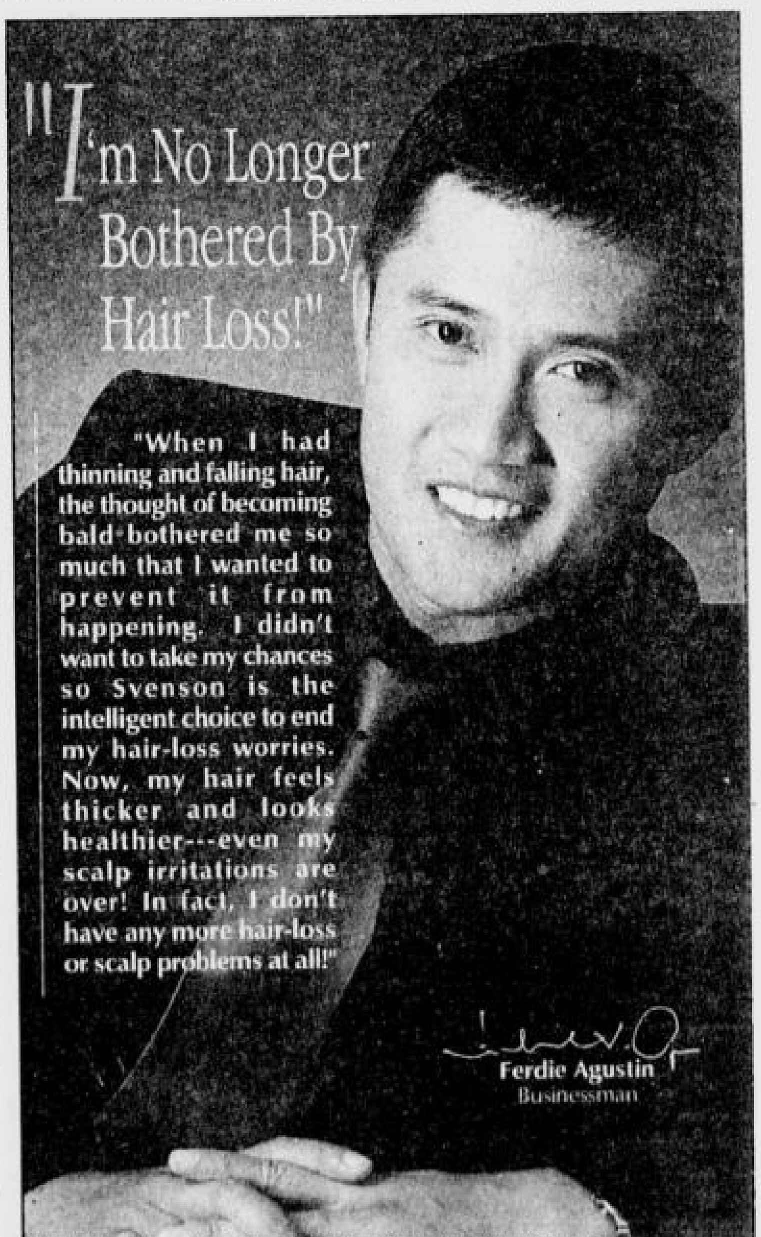
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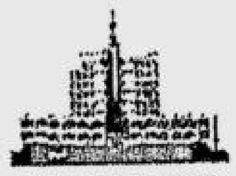

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- The services include producing a detailed communication strategy, creating, pre-testing and producing information, education, communication and advocacy materials, developing a detailed media plan, exposing the materials produced and conducting post-tests or concurrent evaluation.
- The Department of Social Welfare and Development now invites eligible consultants, including advertising agencies, to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants, including advertising agencies, must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).
- A consultant, including advertising agencies, will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out by the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers*, dated January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999 and May 2002).
- Interested consultants, including advertising agencies, may obtain further information from Ms. Maricris Jacinto, BAC Secretariat, Property Division, 2nd Floor, DSWD Building, Batasan Complex, Quezon City with telephone numbers (632) 931-8161, (632) 931-8101 - 07 local 125, and fax no. (632) 951-7116.
- Submission of expressions of interest has been extended up to **17 January 2003.**

(Sgd.) Ms. Rhoda F. Yap
Asst. Secretary and BAC Chairperson
Department of Social Welfare and Development
DSWD Central Office, Batasan Pambansa Complex
Quezon City

(PDI--Jan. 7, 2003)

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
MANILA 1099

November 26, 2002

JOINT DEPARTMENT ORDER NO. 2002-82

TO : **Land Transportation Office**
Bureau of Customs
Bureau of Internal Revenue

SUBJECT : **Executive Order No. 142 Requiring Owners of Taxable Imported Motor Vehicles to Secure Clearances from the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) as a Precondition for their Initial Registration or Renewal of Registration with the Land Transportation Office (LTO).**

Pursuant to Section 5 of Executive Order No. 142, the following rules and regulations are hereby issued in order to effectively implement Executive Order No. 142 and attain the objectives thereof.

A. Objectives

1. To collect the unpaid duties, taxes and fees due on imported motor vehicles.
2. To facilitate the registration and/or renewal of registration of imported motor vehicles after the issuance of the prescribed clearance(s) by the concerned agency.

B. Scope

This Joint Department Order shall cover taxable imported motor vehicles, except those imported under the Car Development Program of the Philippines by car manufacturers and assemblers duly registered with the Board of Investments.

C. General Provisions

1. This Order shall initially cover taxable completely built-up (CBU) units of imported motor vehicles, including motorcycles, except those imported under the Car Development Program of the Philippines by car manufacturers and assemblers duly registered with the Board of Investments. The issuance of clearance for locally assembled and/or re-assembled motor vehicles using imported parts shall be covered by a separate Joint Department Order.
2. Applications for initial registration of unregistered imported motor vehicles under this Order and outside customs zones may be availed until April 30, 2003 pursuant to Section 5(a) of Executive Order No. 142. For registered imported motor vehicles, this Order shall initially be implemented for those imported from January 01, 2000 to December 31, 2002. The periods stated herein shall not preclude owners of imported motor vehicles from availing of the provisions of this Joint Department Order.
3. The requirement to secure clearances from the Bureau of Customs and/or the Bureau of Internal Revenue shall be a one-time requirement, such that the owner of a taxable imported motor vehicle which has already been cleared pursuant to this Order shall no longer be required to obtain clearances for the succeeding renewal of registration.
4. The Land Transportation Office shall not allow the initial registration or renewal of the registration on any imported motor vehicle covered by this Order, unless the appropriate clearances have been issued by the Bureau of Customs and/or the Bureau of Internal Revenue certifying that the correct/proper taxes, duties and fees accruing thereon have been previously paid, or subsequently settled in accordance with this Order.
5. All concerned LTO, BIR and BOC personnel shall extend assistance to vehicle owners to facilitate acceptance of full payment of duties and taxes and/or clearance, as well as the registration or renewal of registration, as the case may be, so as to ensure the least inconvenience to affected vehicle owners. For this purpose, a One-Stop-Shop Clearance Office (OSSCO) shall be established to be housed at the LTO Compound, East Avenue, Quezon City.
6. LTO, BIR and BOC shall issue their respective memorandum orders to disseminate and execute the provisions of these Implementing Guidelines in their respective jurisdiction.
7. LTO, BIR and BOC shall take disciplinary action against their respective personnel found violating any of the provisions of Executive Order No. 142 and its implementing guidelines.
8. LTO, BIR and BOC shall establish and maintain an information feedback loop for the resolution of any problem(s) arising from the issuance of Certificates of Tax Clearance for purposes of initial or renewal of registration of imported motor vehicles.

D. Specific Provisions

In order to effectively delineate the duties and responsibilities of the various agencies involved in the implementation of EO 142, the following are hereby issued, to wit:

1. **Land Transportation Office (LTO)**
   - 1.1 Provide adequate office space and facilities to accommodate the OSSCO responsible in the processing and issuance of the necessary clearances for the efficient and fast delivery of service to the transacting public.
   - 1.2 Accept applications for the initial registration or renewal of registration of motor vehicles.
   - 1.3 Forward the applications together with all supporting documents to the BOC personnel and/or BIR assigned at the OSSCO for verification.
   - 1.4 Register vehicles after clearance(s) has been issued by BOC and/or BIR and after compliance with other LTO rules and regulations.
2. **Assignment of BOC/BIR personnel at the OSSCO, LTO** – For facilitation in the acceptance of the payment of duties, taxes and other fees and the issuance of the BOC/BIR clearance pursuant to E.O. 142, a BOC/BIR Clearance Unit with sufficient personnel directly under their respective Commissioners shall be detailed at the OSSCO, LTO with the following functions:
   - **2.1 Bureau of Customs**
     - 2.1.1 Receive applications for registration with supporting documents from LTO for verification and BOC clearance after duties, taxes and other fees have been paid;
     - 2.1.2 Receive payment for duties, taxes and other fees due on the motor vehicle and issue certificate of payment for initial registration for vehicles were no previous payments of duties and taxes have been paid.
     - 2.1.3 Issue of BOC clearance.
     - 2.1.4 Issue car stickers after clearance shall have been obtained;
   - **2.2 Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)**
     - 2.2.1 Receive applications for registration with supporting documents from LTO for verification and BOC clearance after duties, taxes and other fees have been paid.
     - 2.2.2 Verify the authenticity of the documents presented by applicants for Tax Clearance of imported motor vehicles covered by these joint rules and regulations.
     - 2.2.3 Issue a Certificate of Tax Clearance on all imported motor vehicles whenever applicable.

E. Repealing Clause

All Orders issued which are inconsistent herewith shall be deemed revoked/superseded.

F. Effectivity

This Joint Department Order shall take effect immediately.

Recommending Approval:

Land Transportation Office

Bureau of Customs

Bureau of Internal Revenue

Approved:

Secretary
Department of Transportation & Communication

Secretary
Department of Finance

(PDI – January 7, 2003)

PET PANTRY

The Pet Pantry Philippines, the only super premium dog food brand which offers free delivery, awards its first franchise in the country. Mr. Angel Briones, together with son Ojay, finished a 3-day training workshop on dog nutrition and pet food management, and will be handling the Marikina area. Photo shows (from left), Andrew Chua, Pet Pantry Managing Partner, Ojay Briones and Angel Briones, and Gilbert Tang, Pet Pantry Managing Partner. Other areas in Metro Manila are still available for franchise. Interested parties may call 924-7964.

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"Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come.
The glory of the Lord shines on you"
Isaiah 60:1

The Missionary Society of St. Columban
mourns the sudden death of

FR. PETER LEONARD

who died in Ozamiz City on 5th January 2003,
the Feast of the Epiphany, at the age of 69.

Fr. Leonard was ordained in Ireland in 1957 and came to the Philippines the following year. His early assignments were to the parishes of Lanipao-Lala, Marawi City, Baroy and Ramon Magsaysay in Northern Mindanao. He then studied in Corpus Christi College, London (1965-67) and this was the beginning of a new direction in his missionary life. He established a very successful lay leadership program in the Archdiocese of Ozamiz (1967-1978) and taught in the regional seminary of DOPIM 1980-1990.

Fr. Leonard was the first Rector of the Columban House of Studies in New Manila and was a founding member of the Institute of Formation and Religious Studies. His latest initiative was in setting up a program for Formators in conjunction with IFRS.

In the sudden death of Peter Leonard the Society of St. Columban and the Church in the Philippines have sustained a great loss. However, we are grateful to God that through him a great light has shone on us.

The Funeral Mass will be held in Ozamiz Cathedral on Thursday, 9th January 2003 at 10:00 AM. Burial follows immediately afterwards.

May he rest in peace

REV. FR. LEWIS O'LEARY, C.SS.R.

Former Vice-Provincial Superior of the Redemptorist Vice-Province of Manila
Builder of the present
National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Baclaran
Died in the Grace of Our Lord
on the 24th of December, 2002 in Glendowie, Auckland,
New Zealand at the age of 94

There will be a special Mass for Fr. O'Leary at the
National Shrine of
Our Mother of Perpetual Help
Redemptorist Church Baclaran, Parañaque City

on January 9, 2003, Thursday at 5:45 PM.

MAY HE REST IN PEACE

"From darkness let the light shine!"
Genesis 1:3

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Judge Rafael "Payling" I. Belarmino (Ret)

who returned to his Creator on December 26, 2002

wish to thank all those who comforted us through their expressions of sympathy; who offered prayers, Masses, flowers and donations; who kept vigil with *Tatay* and accompanied him on his final journey.

Ruth Gupana Belarmino,
Children, in-laws and grandchildren

Jesus said: "I am the Resurrection,
if anyone believes in Me,
even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in Me
will never die."

His Excellency, Most Rev. Gaudencio B. Rosales, D.D.,
Archbishop of Lipa,
His Excellency, Most Rev. Buenaventura M. Famadico, D.D.,
Auxiliary Bishop of Lipa,
His Excellency, Most Rev. Salvador Q. Quizon, D.D.,
Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Lipa,
The Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful
of the Archdiocese of Lipa

Together with the Macasaet-Mendoza Family

announce with joy and hope the triumphant crossing over from us to the everlasting love of the Father of our dear

REV. MSGR. EMILIO M. MENDOZA, HP

on 6 January 2003 at the age of 78,
after more than 46 fruitful years of service
in the Lord's vineyard.

His mortal remains lie in state at the Resurrection Chapel of San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City and will be transferred at 4:00 p.m. today to the Parish Hall of Sto. Niño Parish, Pinagtong-ulan, Lipa City.

The Concelebrated Mass of the Resurrection will be offered at 2:00 p.m., Friday, 10 January 2003, at the Sto. Niño Parish Church.

Interment follows immediately at the Sto. Niño Parish Cemetery, Pinagtong-ulan, Lipa City.

Please omit flowers.
Donations to the St. Joseph Seniorate,
Home for the Aged and Sick Priests of the Archdiocese of Lipa,
will be deeply appreciated.

CAPT. VICENTE LUCERO CINCO

Born on January 2, 1918,
peacefully joined our Lord
on January 5, 2003.

His loving wife **Dionisia**; children **Edgar & Fely, Vito & Fely, Linda & Claro, Bebot** (†), **Danny & Lina, Jessie & Diane, August & Chuchie, Manny** (†); grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 11, 2003 at 3 o'clock after the 1 p.m. Mass at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City.

COL. GABRIEL R. MASCARDO

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 5, 2003 at the age of 76.

He is survived by his children **Lito & Liza, Gilbert & Beth, Gabby & Chit, Glenn & Gigi, Grace & Jama**; grandchildren **Gio, Gayle, Guian, GJ, Gavrie Bryan, Gino, Geline, Giana & Geremy**.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapel D, Guadalupe, Makati. Interment will be on January 11, 2003, 12:00 noon at Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque after the 10:30 a.m. Mass at Don Bosco, Makati City.

THE AUGUSTINIAN SISTERS
OF OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION
ANNOUNCE THE DEATH
OF

SR. PRESENTACION E. GENTICA, OSA

on January 6, 2003 at the age of 89.

Funeral Mass will be at 1:00 p.m. on January 7, 2003 at the La Consolacion Convent Chapel, 273 Santolan Road, San Juan, Metro Manila.

Interment will follow at the La Loma Cemetery.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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GREGORIA M. MANALO

April 24, 1892 – January 7, 1978

Her husband **Col. Gregorio Manalo** (1171) (†); children **Ernesto & Francisca Hacuman, Virginia & Silvestre B. Moscoso** (†) and **Eduardo & Betsy Moscoso**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Holy Mass will be offered at:

St. John De La Lasalle, Granada Hills, CA 6 PM
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Cubao 6 PM

In Loving Memory
on the 3rd Death Anniversary of

SILVESTRE B. MOSCOSO

June 19, 1915 – January 8, 2000

His wife **Virginia**; children **Rene & Debra Miller, Sylvia & Arnie Klapow**; grandchildren & great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses will be offered at:

St. John De La Lasalle, Granada Hills, CA 6 PM
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Cubao 6 PM

Dr. HECTOR M. SANTOS

of Sampaloc, Manila
(former Director of Quirino Memorial General Hospital)

passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 03, 2003 at the age of 82.

His loving son Wally; grandchildren Wella & Hecky; brothers, sisters, other relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on January 11, 2003
after the 9:00 a.m. Mass
at Forest Memorial Park in Bagumbong,
Caloocan City.

"Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him."
I Corinthians 2:9

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GREATER USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

Planned structure to lead global concern

By Charles E. Buban

FOR those who have read or seen the movie based on John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's novel "The Lord of the Rings," this planned structure by Australian power company EnviroMission Ltd. will definitely remind you of the Orthanc.

Like the stronghold of wizard Saruman, this structure under the project name Solar Mission will lord over the Australian outback like a lone citadel rising amid the desert plain.

But there's nothing sinister or secret about why it's going to be built in such a remote place: the hot Australian outback will not only serve as an excellent site for exploiting the sun's rays but it's also geologically stable to allow such a massive structure to stand.

Melbourne-based EnviroMission said they will begin this $563-million project before the year ends.

World's first

According to the company's website, the Solar Mission project is the realization of large-scale clean green renewable energy generation from the world's first 200 megawatt solar thermal power station using innovative Solar Tower technology.

Solar Tower technology refers to the method by which the sun's radiation is used to heat a large body of air, which is then forced by the laws of physics (hot air rises) to move through large turbines to generate electricity.

A solar thermal power station using Solar Tower technology will create the conditions to cause hot wind to flow continuously through its turbines to generate electricity.

1-km high tower

Not only that this project is a construction landmark, but also it is grandiose in design as the company envisions a 1-km high solar tower rising in the middle of a 20,000-acre circular enclosure.

This tower would be more than twice the height of Malaysia's Petronas Towers, the world's tallest building (452 m) or almost twice the height of the Canadian National Tower, the world's tallest free-standing structure at 553 m, in Toronto, Canada.

The solar thermal power station will be composed of three major components: the solar collector, solar tower and turbines.

The large solar collector canopy will be constructed from a transparent material with heat-enhancing properties. The tower will be built from reinforced high-strength concrete while the turbines specifically designed for the structure will be constructed from lightweight alloy materials like those used in aircraft manufacture.

Once completed, EnviroMission expects the structure to be generating enough electricity to supply 200,000 homes around the beginning of 2006.

The company also hopes the project will prevent 830,000 tons of greenhouse CO_2 gases from entering the environment that might otherwise have been emitted through coal- or oil-fired power stations.

Funnel turned upside down

Solar Mission will look like an enormous greenhouse canopy with a very tall hollow ventilation tower located at its center—much like a funnel turned upside down.

The sun's radiation will be collected and trapped under the transparent canopy, creating a massive force of air heated to around 35°C greater than the ambient temperature.

The company website explained that the laws of physics will make this air move at 15 meters per second toward the cold air at the top of the tower located in center of the canopy.

The powerful updraft will force the rising air to pass through large turbines positioned at the base of the tower.

The movement of the hot wind through the turbines will generate up to 200 MW of clean, emission free electricity.

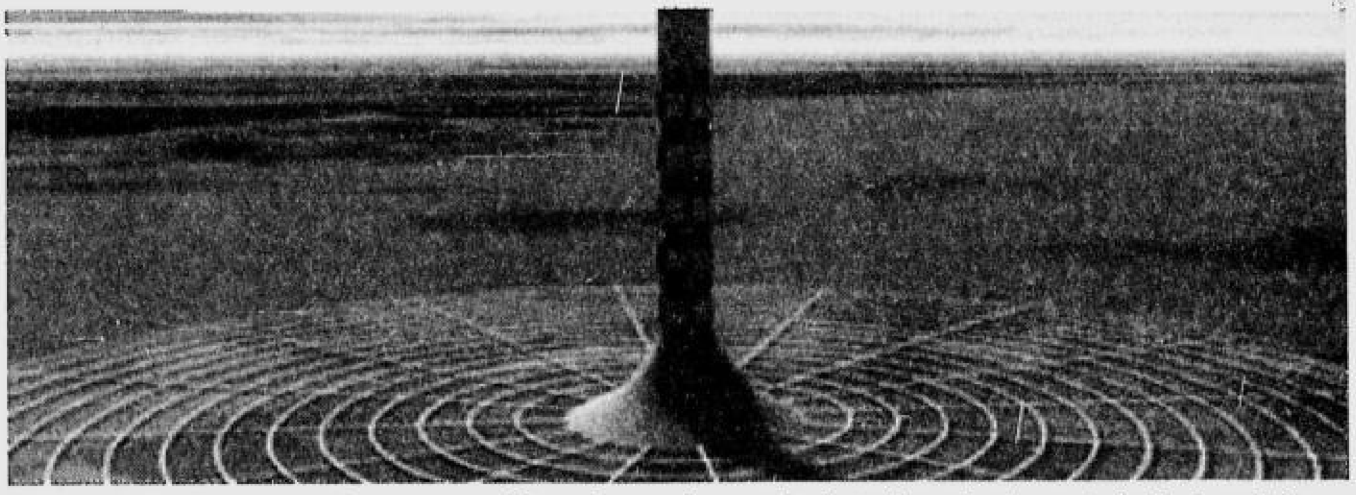
Is it feasible?

The power station based on the solar chimney project designed by German structural engineer Schlaich Bergerman will definitely work, according to the company.

In 1982, Bergerman constructed a similar 200-meter-high demonstration power plant in Manzanares, Spain, that generated 50 kilowatts of electricity for seven years—proving that such a design indeed works.

The project was then closed down after having proved its viability while Bergerman eventually joined EnviroMission.

Another independent technical review done by Sinclair Knight Merz, one of Australia's leading engineering specialists, agreed on the proposed solar thermal power station in Australia, approving the viability of its design concepts and construction methods.



THE WORLD'S tallest man-made structure could soon be towering over the Australian outback as part of a plan to capitalize on the global push for greater use of renewable energy, as seen in this undated artist rendering. REUTERS

Buy this P3.8-M house and also get the car

By Tessa R. Salazar

TWENTY fully furnished houses will soon sit on lots measuring from 125 to 281 square meters and will be charmingly designed California-style. Its model units will be called Seville and Madrid.

The properties are to be found at serene BF Homes Resort Village in flourishing Las Piñas City, and about a kilometer away from the church and two km from exclusive schools such as Elizabeth Seton and Bloomfield Academy.

Irresistible offer

The house and its environs alone are attractive enough. Throw in a car with the deal, and the offer becomes potentially irresistible. It would also make you wonder, why didn't anybody think of this gimmick earlier?

Developer Imperial Homes Corp. seems to have started a novel real estate promo long overdue: package the house with a car. And the offer is flexible: either get the Toyota Corolla XL for free, or have the 50 percent down payment for the car free.

The downside of this is the price, which becomes limited to the upper middle-class buyers. For every purchase of house worth P4.5-million and above, the homeowner gets the Toyota Corolla XL for free. Purchases below P4.4 million entitle a free 50-percent down on the car.

To get a free car, the prospective homeowner will be required to pay the full 30 percent down payment and secure bank approval for the financing of the balance within the promo period (up to March 31), says Imperial Homes Corp. marketing executive Roy Tellez. If the buyer chooses the extended payment scheme and still want to avail of the car promo and in the event of a car price increase, the buyer shall pay the price difference of the car, he added.

Tellez says that for in-house financing, international buyers who want to avail of the car package are required to pay 60 percent down payment within the promo period. The balance, meanwhile, is payable in five years at 19 percent interest or in 10 years at 21 percent interest. If the buyer chooses an extended down payment scheme and still avail of the promo, and in the event of a price increase of the car, the buyer shall pay the price difference of the car, he says.

No model unit yet

There aren't any model unit yet to whet buyers' appetites. Instead, visitors would see a fully furnished two-story house sitting on a 200-sq.-m corner lot priced at P2.8 million. Sorry, this model—called Camille—is not part of the novel deal, says Imperial Homes Corp.

Tellez says that the soon-to-be-built houses will have two to three bedrooms. They will come with a family hall, service area and stone-paved carport, a maid's room, floor-to-ceiling cabinets, shower enclosure, built-in cook top and oven, granite finish counter tops, beach plank floor for the bedrooms, Cipac Monier roofing and landscaped front yard.

The promo is good for houses with a P3.8-million price tag (prices can reach P5.1 million). The promo ends on March 31, or until supply lasts (As of this time, only 20 houses are offered with the car).

Lecture series on real estate investment

A SEMINAR on "Investing in Real Estate" will be conducted by the Urban Institute of Real Estate on Jan. 22, from 1:30 to 6:00 p.m., at the Max's Restaurant, level 4 Robinsons Metro East, Marcos Highway, Dela Paz, Pasig City.

This seminar will immediately be followed by a series of detailed lectures at the same time and venue as follows: Jan. 23—Real Estate Finance and Investment Analysis; Jan. 24—Property Management and Real Estate Appraisal; Jan. 27—HLURB Rules and Property Development; Jan. 28—Joint Ventures and Syndications; and on Jan. 29—Real Estate Taxation and Contract Documentation and Registration.

For particulars, interested parties may call Urban Institute at 681-0928 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

GMA wants police housing project opened to others

By Vincent Cabreza
and Robert Abaño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA. TRINIDAD, Benguet—Cordillera police officials showed off their first mass housing project for policemen here last week, but it failed to impress President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The President, during her working holiday stay in Baguio City, discouraged Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Philippine National Police chief, from developing exclusive lease-to-own villages for policemen like the 292-unit Alno Sunflower Homes in Barangay Alno here, saying it would be inefficient.

Open to others

Ms Macapagal said she wanted the 2.2-hectare housing project opened to other government employees and possibly farmers.

'This is money and you cannot have your investments sleeping while you wait for the policemen to respond to your offers. Open it to the farmers. I'm sure by now they can consider their own houses," she told the project's contractor, Wilson Capuyan.

Stumbling blocks

Ms Macapagal said the housing industry's biggest stumbling blocks have been mass housing plans that rely on untested and newly conceived cooperatives, which is the formula being capitalized on by many housing contractors.

She said her administration is currently studying the real impact of housing cooperatives on the mass housing industry, partly to cover the gaps that have made government housing projects inaccessible to its targeted markets.

The Macapagal administration is still addressing a 4.5-million housing backlog, which it inherited from three administrations.

What is factual, Ms Macapagal told policemen here on Dec. 29, is that untested cooperatives have never successfully transacted housing projects due to their reliance on loans.

"That's the failure story of many cooperatives," she explained.

Housing for policemen

Ms Macapagal asked Cordillera policemen to consider hooking up instead with an established cooperative like the Baguio-Benguet Credit Cooperative Inc. (BBCCI), to help plan out a better housing project for them.

Police have already set their sights on this community for policemen.

"*Maraming trabaho, maraming kaso, sa katotohanan walang bahay* (The police endure lots of jobs, and lots of court suits, but their reality really is that they have no homes)," said Supt. Wilfredo Franco, chief of the Cordillera police's personnel division.

The project offers policemen 123 economy-class houses and 129 socialized housing units. Seven units are currently under construction for local police officers.

P03 Mabel Dubba owns the P500,000 house that Ms Macapagal inspected last week.

Franco said policemen could avail of the units through a low-interest loan with the Pag-ibig Fund. The agency allocated P21 million to jumpstart the P80-million project.

Franco said an applicant needs to pay a P20,000 reservation fee, which is deductible from the unit's cost.

The cheapest unit, he said, has a monthly amortization of P4,500 payable in 20 years.

"*Mas malaki pa ang inuubos ng mga yan sa* beerhouse (Some policemen spend bigger than that amount drinking in beerhouses)," he claimed, pointing out that policemen can easily pay the amortization of their houses.

Capuyan said a memorandum of agreement with the PNP cemented the exclusive housing deal.

Too far

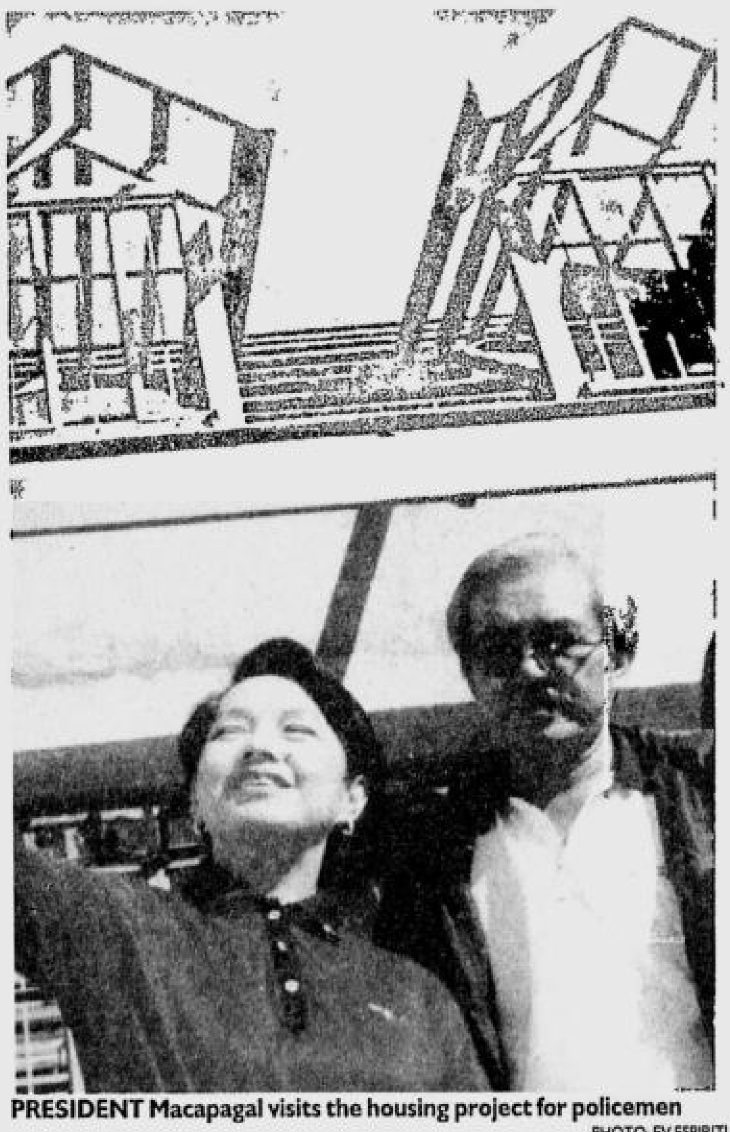
"(But this) is too far," noted Ms Macapagal.

Barangay Alno is 3.3 km away from the La Trinidad main road, but is at the bend that is closest to Camp Dangwa, the Cordillera police's headquarters.

Ms Macapagal's 15-vehicle convoy had to navigate through a winding one-lane concrete route through this interior La Trinidad community.

But Benguet Gov. Raul Molintas said the area is ideal for rapid development.

"It is far today but the way La Trinidad is growing, this shows signs of improving really fast. The property values here have already risen to P1,000 for every square meter and this can grow into a new city within a city," Capuyan said in Filipino.



PRESIDENT Macapagal visits the housing project for policemen
PHOTO: EV ESPIRITU

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Rural, mass-based housing to stimulate realty sector

By Tessa R. Salazar

ILLUSTRATION. ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

GO low, and reach out. Far out. Real estate developers are starting to see the economic storm clouds clearing up—somewhere among those humble masses and among the provincial folk.

Developers forecast that mass housing, not high-end housing, will actually drive the real estate sector this year.

And they're betting their money on it. Subdivision and Housing Developers Association president Jesus B Atencio observes that developers' commitment for socialized and low-cost housing projects comprises nearly 60 percent of the SHDA pledges, while economic housing makes up 36 percent.

Socialized housing means house and lot package from P225,000 and below. A low-cost housing would mean P225,000 to P500,000 while an economic housing would mean P500,000 to P2 million.

The organization earlier promised the Macapagal administration that it would build at least 236,076 houses by 2004 for low- and middle-income earners.

FPDSavills Research, however, sees middle-income housing (horizontal and residential developments) to continue to be a bright spot for the sector, especially in the light of the decline in interest and lending rates, which support future demand or takeup levels in this property segment.

More project sites

More areas in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao would become housing project sites than in the National Capital Region and in Metro Manila, said SHDA chair Teofisto Guingona III.

Developers, Guingona says, were starting to realize the vast potentials of sites outside NCR. He adds that developers would be able to bring more development and economic activity to the countryside as more houses will be built in those areas.

The reemerging interest of city folk in farm management and farm estates is further fueling interest in countryside horizontal and vertical developments.

Luzon, however, is still the major location of developers' projects for 2002 and 2003, taking up about 50 percent of the SHDA pledge with 91,067 houses. Mindanao takes 20 percent (37,545 units), and Visayas and NCR get 15 percent apiece.

Homes for OFWs

Developers see more overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) buying houses in 2003. Mars Mendoza, former SHDA president and housing committee chair, says the OFW market was "somewhat harder to access" and remained largely untapped.

Despite the distance and the marketing costs, the SHDA is reaching out to the OFWs by establishing housing fairs abroad.

SHDA developer members say these housing fairs make it possible for the association to achieve a presence abroad, at an affordable cost. The SHDA is all set for the Dubai, Tokyo, Osaka and Seoul housing fairs to be held this month and next month.

FPDSavills Research, meanwhile, stresses government reforms aimed at keeping mortgages affordable would remain key in motivating the private sector to invest in housing developments.

Condominium rent to go down by 20%, predicts FPDSavills

By Tessa R. Salazar

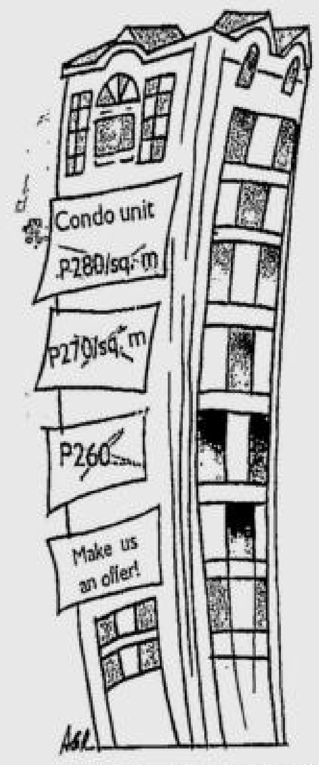


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

THE LOSS of some is the gain of others. In the condominium business, this would prove a long-term dictum.

FPDSavills Research predicts that for 2003, rents for residential condos are expected to decrease by as much as 15 to 20 percent. And it won't end there, as the rent would continue to go down well into 2004.

Tenants, rejoice. But don't make it too obvious for your landlords.

FPDSavills' Benedict Miranda says the present average rent for a two-bedroom condo unit in Makati is P280 per square meter per month. In Ortigas, the rate stands at P230. Capital values, meanwhile, are expected to remain steady at P50,000 per sq. m in Makati and P33,000 in Ortigas.

The drop in rents will still continue to attract the "flight to quality," as lower rents will favor residents relocating to newer and yet more affordable units.

Future supply levels

Residential condos' future supply levels remain uncertain, as most condominium projects that have been put on hold in the last two years haven't resumed construction.

Miranda says residential condominiums in the Ortigas Central Business District, if completed, would add 2,000 more condominium units up for grabs.

Would anyone grab them?

Miranda says demand would still remain flat because of growing security concerns and affordability factor, especially the demand for luxury residential condominium developments. Vacancy rates increased by the end of 2002 at 28 percent—up from 26 percent in 2001.

To further prove the lack of new demand for residential condominiums, FPDSavills Research says most of the transactions in 2002 involving residential condos were renewals of expiring leases.

By the end of 2002, there were 13,273 residential condo units in the Makati and Ortigas CBDs.

Safety in construction sites

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

BUILDING DREAMS

ONE of the most important aspects in construction is the control of hazards in the site to reduce the risk of accident occurrence.

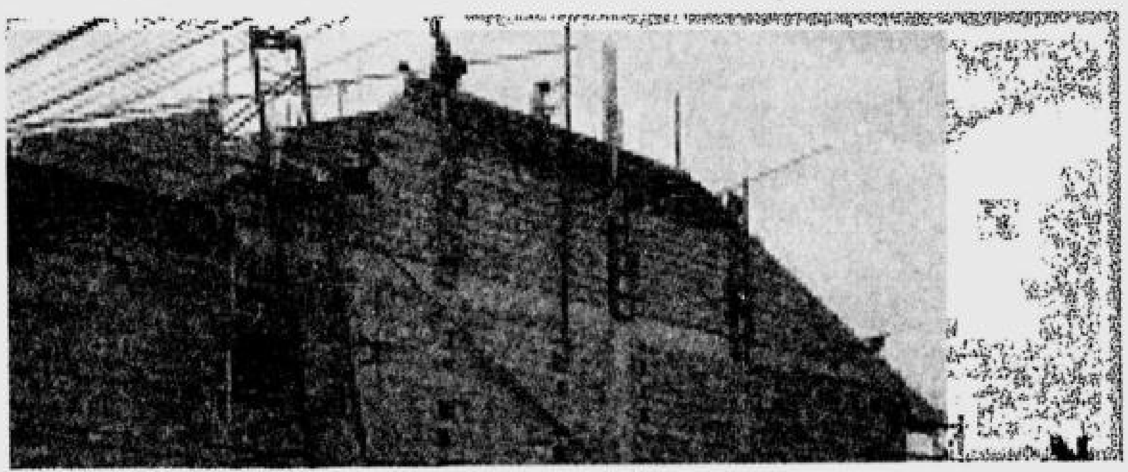
Construction, based on statistics, shows the highest rate of accidents among industries. Accidents reduce productivity in terms of time, effort and money. Builders must understand the causes of accidents to provide a safe working environment and increase efficiency. The final structure or house can then be delivered faster and safer.

Some companies and workers lack in training on safety procedures and persistently use unsafe and inefficient methods in their work. They simply rely on instincts and skills for the safety of their methods.

Site conditions

Here are some of the typical construction site conditions that contribute to the risk of accident occurrence.

- **Housekeeping.** Most of the time, workers leave behind their tools, equipment and materials anywhere for their convenience and for easy access. Passageways are blocked or obstructed due to this, decreasing the efficiency of other workers, and increasing the risk of accident occurrence and loss of tools or equipment. This is because of the lack of proper housekeeping and convenient storage areas for toolboxes and similar equipment.
- **Concrete works.** Working with concrete also pose the risk of inhalation of the cement powder. Without any protective equipment, continuous contact with concrete mixture can harm the skin. Most of the workers take this fact for granted and carry on with their work without knowing its harmful effects and with no safety precautions.
- **Heights.** All vertical constructions (houses, buildings, etc.) involve workers to operate at heights. Those without safety lines who work on platforms without any railings are in danger of falling on those below and so are their tools. Some scaffolding systems do not have guardrails, toeboards, access ladders, or the proper bracing to be considered safe.



ALL vertical constructions involve workers to operate at heights.

- **Electrical facilities.** Switch boxes that were left open or without covers pose as electrocution risk to unwary workers. The same risk is also present when fuses burn out and are replaced with copper wires, which doesn't serve the same purpose. This is usually the case when no spare fuse is available or when workers are just too busy, or careless, to find a replacement. Faulty electrical facilities are the major causes of fires at construction sites.
- **Personal protective equipment (PPE).** Inconvenience of personal protective equipment is usually the reason for not wearing them. Workers feel confined and hot wearing these equipment and choose to work with more comfortable clothes. Some companies let the workers buy their own PPE and the workers cannot afford this and settle with their working clothes.

These are only a few things we should notice in a construction site. There are many other equally important points to consider with regard to safety and all of these should be noticed as they increase the risk of accidents and promote inefficiency of their work. A safety engineer at site can identify the risks of the project. Each of these items has its standards of safety to attain, to reduce, or to limit the risk involved.

Safety standards state many rules on how an employer and his workers should act, and what they should do to keep their working environment free from accidents.

Employer's responsibilities

Employers should provide a safe working environment, free from hazards that may cause risk of injury, or otherwise endanger the health and lives of his employees. All equipment should be approved and assured to be safe for use.

Complete instructions should be given to all employees, including those that pertain to their safety, making sure they know what measures to observe and what procedures to follow in cases of emergency. They should familiarize themselves with their work environment. A short briefing on safety is recommended for all those involved in the project before they begin their work.

Construction groups should furnish workers with personal protective equipment. Construction safety signs must be provided to warn workers, inspectors and the public of hazards existing in the workplace.

Adequate supply of safe drinking water, and adequate sanitary and washing facilities should be at hand. Workers should be informed of the potential safety and health hazards to which they may be exposed in their workplace. Education and training on the measures available for the prevention, control and protection against those hazards should be a regular thing.

Employee's responsibilities

Employees and workers should also take part in promoting their safety and health. They should be able to understand all instructions and information given to them not only about their work but also with regard to their safety. Everyone should be safety-conscious and perform only safe practices so as not to endanger himself or others.

Workers should properly equip themselves with their personal protective equipment when they come to work. This usually consists of safety shoes, safety clothes, safety helmets and safety glasses worn when they enter the project premises.

Workers and employees should report all cases of accident occurrence or hazards that may endanger the safety of their working environment to identify the possible causes of accidents and help prevent it from happening.

Protective equipment

Personal protective equipment, or PPE, are items worn by the workers in the site to prevent them from being harmed or injured during work. These are the most basic but important part of safety in construction and when all workers use these properly, they can already reduce the risk considerably.

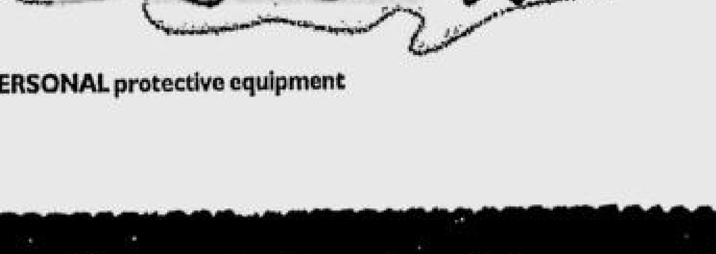
All personnel visiting and working in the site should be required to wear at least the minimum PPE, which include hardhats and safety gloves.

Workers must wear proper working clothes all the time. Some workers wear rugged shirts and pants, because they are more comfortable to wear, but dangling and tattered clothing can hit loose objects and may cause accidents. Safety belts and lifelines should be worn when working in high places. In case a worker falls, lifelines attached to the scaffoldings will hold him and save his life.

Ideally, all of these safety measures and rules should be strictly followed. Unfortunately, some workers prefer comfort rather than safety, and most of the time, their own instincts serve them well and survive a period of time without encountering any accident. This encourages them to bypass safety measures but then again, accidents are accidents, and no one can tell how grave they are, and when or where, or to whom they may occur.

For construction sites, a safety engineer should be in place to oversee the safety program and implement the safety procedures. This ensures that all workers, employees and visitors at a site are properly protected for unforeseen events. Let us all work toward a safer work environment. As the old saying goes—Better safe than sorry.

(Alexis A. Acacio is an associate professor of civil engineering at the University of the Philippines. He is also a marketing and technical consultant to various real estate developers and construction companies. You may reach him at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.)



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Fitness LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Kape
cookies

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

How to change bad habits

Part II

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

CLINICAL psychologist Clayton Tucker-Ladd gives excellent step-by-step advice on how to change your bad habits in his on-line book "Psychological Self-Help." I have been using four of his techniques since December last year in an effort to take control of some of my bad habits that are causing havoc in my life.

In last week's column, I shared the first technique, which is changing your environment to change your habits. In today's column, let's look at the other three techniques: substituting a good habit for a bad one, self-monitoring your behavior, and rewarding the good habit.

Habit reversal training

Ladd calls this technique "Habit Reversal Training." Instead of trying to break or stop a bad habit, replace it with a better or incompatible one. I know people who have broken their bad habit of snacking while they watch TV by taking up a hobby that requires the use of their hands like cross-stitching. You can't snack and cross-stitch at the same time.

Another example is drinking hot water or herbal tea in place of coffee if you are trying to break the caffeine habit. Many of our habits are comforting to us, so if you remove them completely, you feel empty and end up doing them again.

Charles Burke, author of "Command More Luck," writes that his father was able to quit smoking by using a substitution technique. His father kept a pack of cigarettes in his shirt pocket and when he felt the urge to smoke, he would pull out a cigarette and shred it. This substitute habit gave him time to take control of his impulses. He went through many packs until he no longer needed to keep cigarettes. For a while, his fingers would just go through the shredding motion whenever he felt like smoking and eventually, he dropped even that.

> Reinforce a new good practice by rewarding yourself

Ladd says that to overcome an old habit, the substitute behavior should not be distracting to others, it should be able to prevent the old habit from occurring, and it should be something you can do for at least three minutes while you carry on with your normal activities. For example, he says you can feel the change in your pocket instead of pulling your hair or you can press your foot against the floor instead of jiggling your leg.

When I was a teenager, I used to jiggle my leg when I was bored in class. I eventually found out that it is not socially acceptable for a girl to be jiggling her thigh, not to mention that I had a lot of thigh to jiggle and the last thing I wanted was to call attention to that part of my anatomy. So I unknowingly used Ladd's habit reversal technique when I switched to wriggling my toes instead. It was a perfect substitute behavior for me because I didn't disturb anyone and it didn't make me look like I had bad manners.

There is research that using this substitution technique under the guidance of a psychologist is 90 percent effective, which is quite impressive. There is no research to confirm if doing it on your own (self-help) is as effective, but the technique is easy enough to implement so it's worth trying. Ladd warns though that it works best only with certain simple habits like always touching your face, and not with more complex bad habits like constantly criticizing your officemates.

Self-monitoring your behavior

I love this technique because I come from a long line of list makers and record keepers— my grandmother, mother, and sister being the champions. I have used self-monitoring successfully in the past to improve my eating and exercise habits. Writing everything down made me mindful of what I was putting in my mouth and how often I was really exercising.

You will be surprised at how often people underestimate the amount of food they eat and overestimate the frequency of their exercise. Ladd writes about a study involving participants who had failed at losing weight on 20 or more diets and weight-loss programs. The participants claimed that the reason for their failure was faulty genes and poor metabolism because they ate like birds but they still couldn't lose weight. When the researchers carefully recorded their eating habits 24 hours a day, they found that the participants were eating twice as much as they said they ate. These people weren't lying when they said they ate very little; they were just unmindful of their behavior.

The bad habit I am trying to get rid off this year is wasting time. So for one month now, I have been recording in a little notebook exactly what I do with my hours and minutes. This is when I discovered that it takes an average of 15 hours to write my column if I have a lot of research to do. Okay, I admit I am a research junkie and I can happily surf the net or go through my files for hours without realizing how much time has passed. But even if I enjoy doing research, it is still time wasted because I don't need all that extra information for the angle of my current article. Being aware of this habit has made me stick only to the research I actually need and I have been able to save a couple of hours.

Other ways of monitoring your behavior is putting all the hair you nervously pull into an envelope to count at the end of the day, or keep a logbook of how often you water your plants if you have the bad habit of forgetting to irrigate your garden.

Ladd says the problem with this technique is that there is a rebellious critter in all of us who resists doing something as mechanical or clerical as writing things down. Another problem, he says, is forgetting to record your behavior. But he says that even if your record keeping is sloppy, try to keep doing it because self-monitoring can really help you change bad habits.

Rewarding the good habit

The carrot always works better than the stick. People, like animals, respond better to a reward than to punishment. You can reinforce or promote a new good habit by giving yourself short-term and long-term rewards. An example of a short-term or immediate reward is to put aside a certain amount of money every time you don't give in to the urge to smoke a cigarette or every time you go to the gym to work out. The long-term reward will be when at the end of the month, you use the money you "saved" to buy yourself a CD or to get a massage.

Another way of reinforcing a good habit is using the power of your imagination. Every time you don't feel like going to the gym, think about how good you will look in those jeans that you haven't been able to wear in a while. The picture in your head of you and your jeans is a short-term reward. The long-term reward will come the day you triumphantly slip yourself into those jeans without having to turn blue in the face from sucking in your stomach.

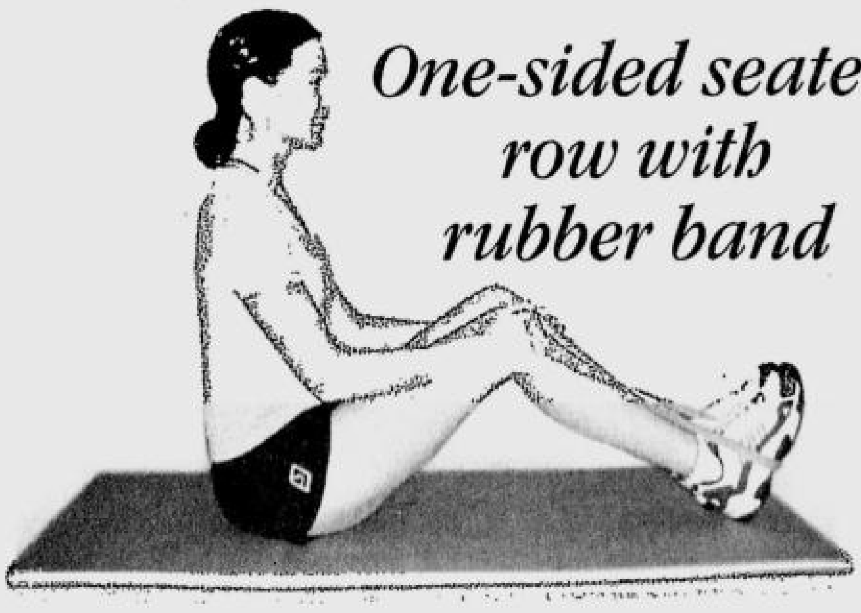
As for me, I am rewarding myself for good time management by having the spare time to read a book on weekends. Last month, I finished "The Mists of Avalon" and "One Hundred Years of Solitude" and enjoyed both books thoroughly. I am looking forward to reading all the books I did not have the time for because of poor time management, so I am going to continue keeping track of my schedule in my little notebook until it becomes a well established habit. Once I've gotten that licked, I am going to tackle the clutter in my desk. Like Ladd says, one habit at a time.

Watch "In Fitness & In Health" Mondays to Fridays on Studio 23 at 6-6:30 a.m. and on Net25 (Channel 62), 6-6:30 p.m.

For questions and past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

One-sided seated row with rubber band



STRENGTHENS the latissimus dorsi, the muscles at the sides of your upper back. Since this exercise is done using one side at a time, it also strengthens your abdominal muscles because you have to use them to stabilize your torso.

Equipment

Exercise mat and rubber band. You can buy exercise bands at sporting good stores, or rubber bands used for slingshots or binding pipes in hardware stores or public markets. Make sure that it is at least 4 ft in length.

Exercise technique

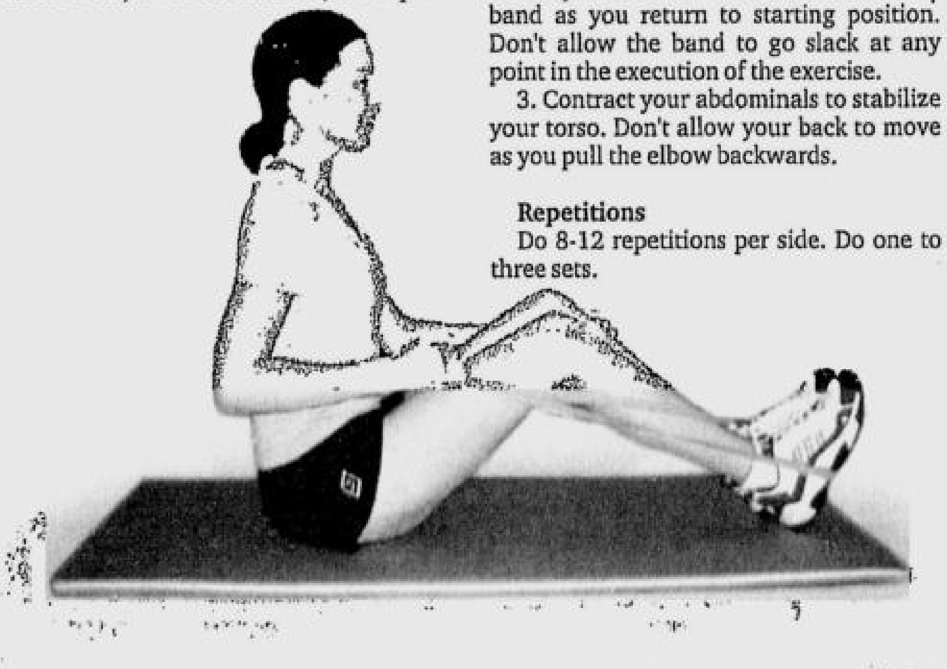
1. Sit on the mat with your back straight, knees bent, heels on the floor, toes up and the rubber band looped around the arch of one foot. Your left hand will hold your left knee to help stabilize your torso.
2. Keep your body steady as you slowly pull your right elbow backwards by contracting the muscles at the sides of your upper back.
3. Return to starting position.
4. Do the desired number of repetitions, then switch to the other side.

Performance tips

1. Exhale as you pull your elbow backwards; inhale as you return to starting position.
2. Make sure there is tension in the band before you start. Control the tension in the band as you return to starting position. Don't allow the band to go slack at any point in the execution of the exercise.
3. Contract your abdominals to stabilize your torso. Don't allow your back to move as you pull the elbow backwards.

Repetitions

Do 8-12 repetitions per side. Do one to three sets.



Tackling fitness and weight loss issues today

A RECENT National Health Survey revealed that 6 percent of the world's adult population is obese and 24.4 percent is overweight. These are alarming statistics that greatly emphasize the real need to shape up and maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight, one becomes susceptible to many chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and gall bladder disease, to name a few.

Nowadays, there are numerous weight-management programs availa ble for those who want to shed off those extra pounds and achieve their ideal weight. Scientific and technological advances have modernized weight-loss systems, offering people numerous options like diet medications, passive treatments, liposuction, as well as other aerobic activities. Despite all these fitness programs, most of the time, losing weight comes down to just the basics—proper nutrition, exercise and adequate supplementation.

Multifaceted system

In response to the pressing need for individuals to keep fit, Nu Skin presents the Body Design Program, a unique multifaceted system that addresses the complexities of fitness and weight loss. Designed by Pharmanex and other nutritional experts, the Body Design Program consists of Body Design Protein Shake and Metabotrim. It is a safe and convenient 90-day program that focuses on appetite control and maintenance of optimal blood sugar levels. With continuous use, the Body Design Program delivers lasting results.

Body Design Protein Shake is an alternative meal replacement drink that provides adequate nutrition. It has 20 g of protein, which is important in building lean body mass and increasing basal metabolic rate.

On the other hand, Metabotrim is a dietary supplement designed to support the body's normal metabolic process. It allows one to achieve a healthy metabolism, helping the body to burn calories, support fat metabolism, reduce carbohydrate craving and promote energy levels.

The Body Design Program works best when used as a system because the products are especially formulated to complement each other.

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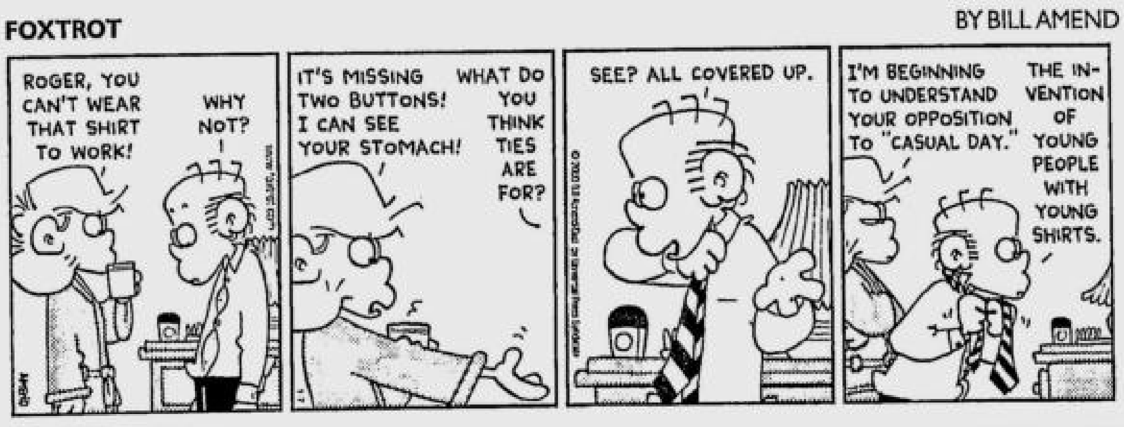
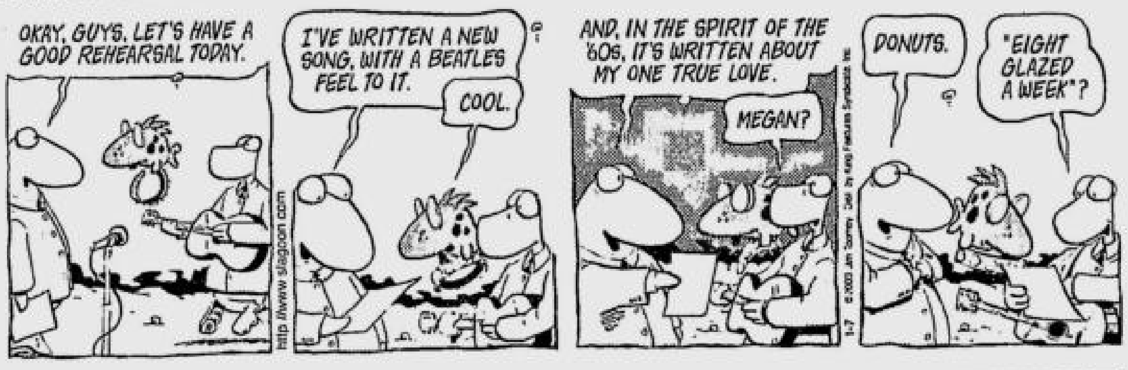
BY BILL AMEND


ROGER, YOU CAN'T WEAR THAT SHIRT TO WORK!
WHY NOT?
IT'S MISSING TWO BUTTONS! I CAN SEE YOUR STOMACH!
WHAT DO YOU THINK TIES ARE FOR?
SEE? ALL COVERED UP.
I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND YOUR OPPOSITION TO "CASUAL DAY."
THE INVENTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH YOUNG SHIRTS.

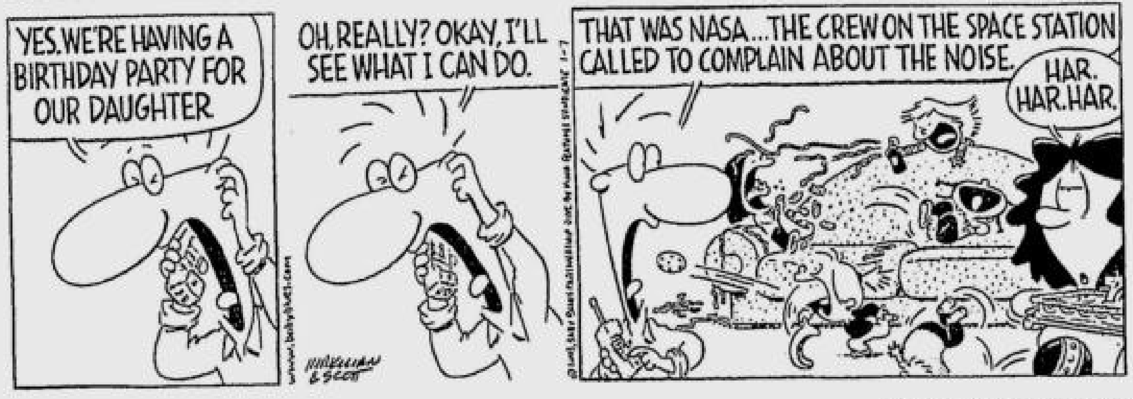
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


OKAY, GUYS, LET'S HAVE A GOOD REHEARSAL TODAY.
I'VE WRITTEN A NEW SONG, WITH A BEATLES FEEL TO IT.
COOL.
AND, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE '60S, IT'S WRITTEN ABOUT MY ONE TRUE LOVE.
MEGAN?
DONUTS.
"EIGHT GLAZED A WEEK"?
http://www.slagoon.com

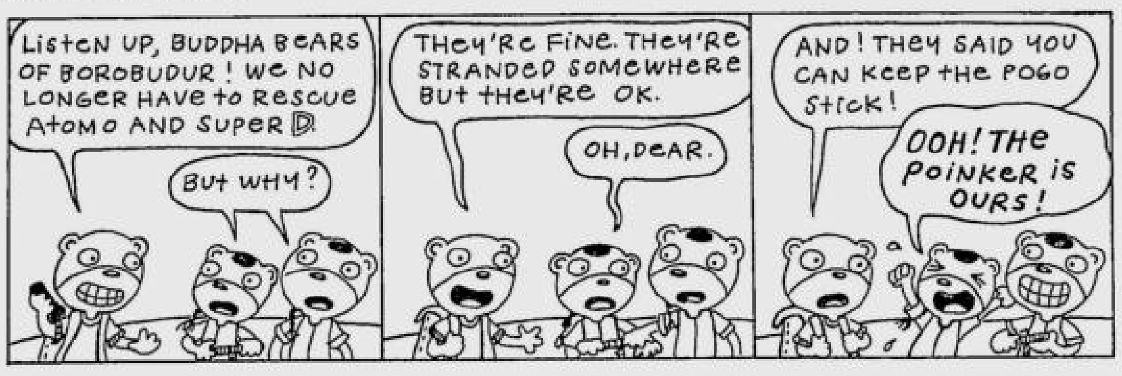
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YES. WE'RE HAVING A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR OUR DAUGHTER
OH, REALLY? OKAY, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.
THAT WAS NASA...THE CREW ON THE SPACE STATION CALLED TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE NOISE.
HAR. HAR. HAR.
www.babyblues.com

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Listen UP, BUDDHA BEARS OF BOROBUDUR! WE NO LONGER HAVE to RESCUE Atomo AND SUPER D.
But WHY?
They're Fine. They're STRANDED SOMEWHERE But they're OK.
OH, DEAR.
AND! They SAID YOU CAN KEEP the POGO Stick!
OOH! The Poinker is OURS!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sandra Bernhard, Nicolas Cage, Kenny Loggins, Katie Couric

Happy Birthday: You will have the ability to put your plans into motion and the support you need to follow your dreams this year. You should get involved in activities that will help you overcome some of the habits that you've been holding onto for some time. Your numbers are 3, 14, 27, 31, 38, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Put a little extra effort into your work and you will get the rewards you're looking for. Your intentions and motivations are positive and will lead to success.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Get out, join a group or attend a seminar today. Avoid getting involved in joint financial ventures even if it means disappointing someone.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Put in extra hours at work or make an effort to find a better-paying job. Business meetings will reveal valuable information. Listen carefully.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't be shy. Talk about the way you feel. Let your intentions be known and don't back down if you really believe in what you are trying to accomplish.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be a little anxious if you overspent recently. You may need a little extra cash for an unexpected bill. Avoid a situation that could lead to a potential conflict.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Financial stress will be the result of poor budgeting. If you've been pushing the envelope where your health is concerned, it's time for proper diet and exercise.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Look at the different career options available. Use your discipline if you want to get ahead. You have what it takes, but if you are lazy today, you will miss out on a tremendous opportunity.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will have to watch how you handle the people around you today. Deception is likely if you are willing to accept what others tell you to be the truth. If something doesn't appear to be right, dig deeper.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take a stance and clear up any problems that have been lingering around since last year. Honesty in your personal relationship will be the key to a solid and lasting union.

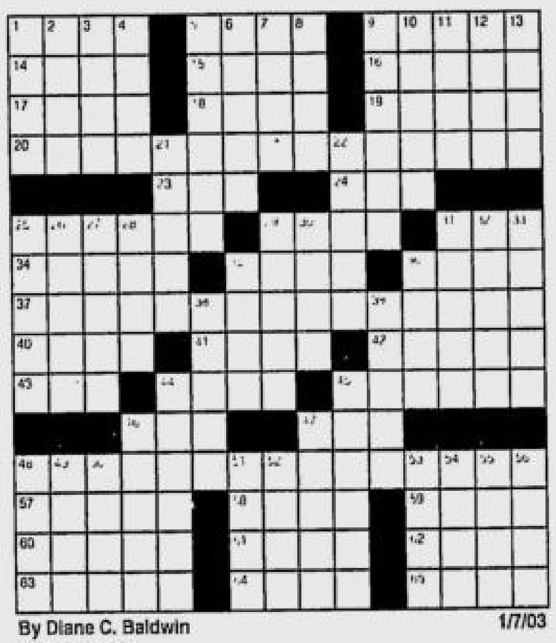
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take some time out to do the things that make you happy. A friendship with someone from a different background will be insightful. You can build up your confidence today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Professional gains can be made if you get moving. Business trips will pay big dividends and introduce you to some worthwhile individuals.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't take anyone or anything for granted or you'll have to face some unexpected issues. Take a look at yourself and the situation you face. Part of the problem may be due to something you did or didn't do.

Birthday Baby: You will be creative, engaging and willing to try new things. You will have a built-in strength that will lead to all sorts of interesting scenarios throughout your life.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

1/7/03

ACROSS
1 Part of Batman's garb
5 Up to the job
9 Fit to suit
14 Made tracks
15 Croaker
16 Theatrical production
17 Creative flash
18 Drawn-out
19 Remove the rime
20 Stills the jitters
23 Increase
24 __ for the money...
25 Greyhound pacer
29 Thicken, as cream
31 Fitting
34 Sits in neutral
35 Boot tips
36 Compatriot
37 Brings inner peace
40 Baseball stats
41 Piper's followers
42 School composition
43 Put in place
44 Fourth planet
45 Yellowstone sight
46 Not in the running
47 Mont Blanc, for one
48 Tranquilizes with overconfidence
57 Battery terminal
58 Make a pledge
59 Pinnacle
60 Flight between stories
61 Knotty wood
62 Iota
63 Sharpens
64 Huskies' pull
65 Musical unit

DOWN
1 In vogue
2 Verdi heroine
3 Orange cover
4 Dutch cheese
5 Buoyant
6 Big Apple borough
7 Singular
8 Souffle ingredients
9 Full of passion
10 Tractor man
11 Tel __-Jaffa
12 Brownish purple
13 Golf gadgets
21 Light brushing sound
22 Lariat knot
25 Gets out of bed
26 Be wild about
27 Swell
28 Plays the ponies
29 Codgers
30 Camera's eye
31 African shrubs
32 Fancy feather
33 Texas rose-growing center
35 Russian ruler
36 Soot-covered
38 Muse of lyric poetry
39 Dance moves
44 Meditative ones
45 Was radiant
46 Classic tune
47 Make amends
48 Wield a whip
49 John Ruskin's "__ This Last"
50 Library transaction
51 Rest periods
52 Satan's specialty
53 Grassy plot
54 Sound reflection
55 Release
56 Sampras of tennis

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	L	E	D	■	R	E	F	■	S	T	A	L	A	G
H	U	L	A	■	A	T	E	■	A	R	R	I	V	E
A	L	L	R	I	G	H	T	■	P	A	S	T	E	L
Q	U	E	E	N	B	E	E	S	■	D	O	E	R	S
■	■	■	■	A	A	R	■	O	P	E	N	■	■	■
S	T	R	O	N	G	■	P	I	E	R	■	H	E	M
C	O	U	P	E	■	T	A	L	E	■	S	A	R	I
E	M	P	E	R	O	R	P	E	N	G	U	I	N	S
N	E	E	D	■	B	E	A	D	■	R	E	T	I	E
E	S	E	■	G	O	B	S	■	C	O	Z	I	E	R
■	■	■	T	R	E	F	■	S	O	U	■	■	■	■
E	D	D	I	E	■	K	I	N	G	C	R	A	B	S
P	R	I	M	A	L	■	B	O	N	H	O	M	I	E
I	N	V	E	S	T	■	I	R	A	■	B	E	N	T
C	O	A	X	E	D	■	S	E	C	■	E	N	D	S

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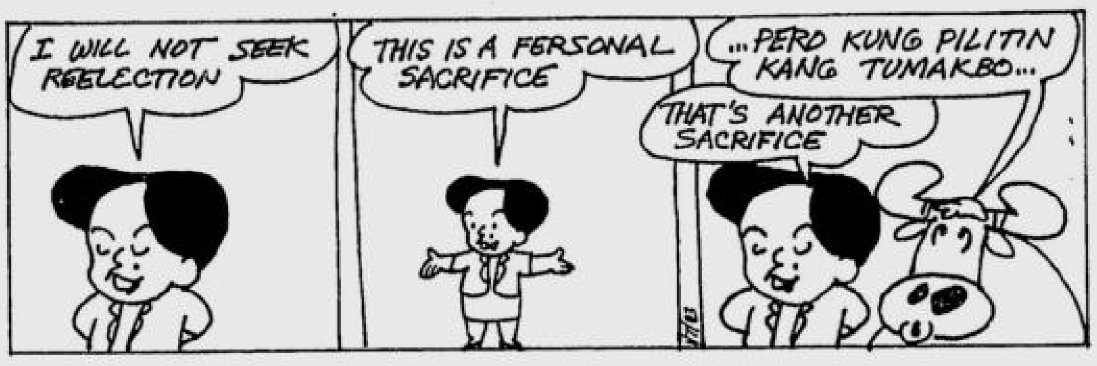
1/7/03

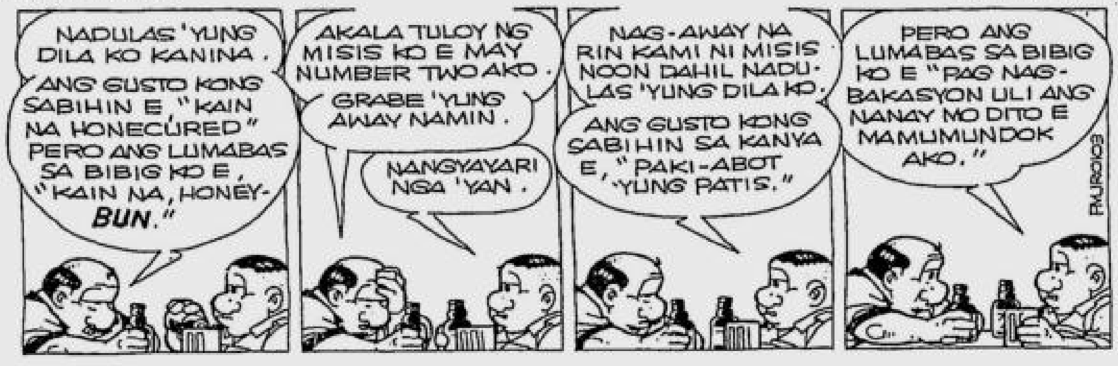
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


I WILL NOT SEEK REELECTION
THIS IS A PERSONAL SACRIFICE
...PERO KUNG PILITIN KANG TUMAKBO...
THAT'S ANOTHER SACRIFICE

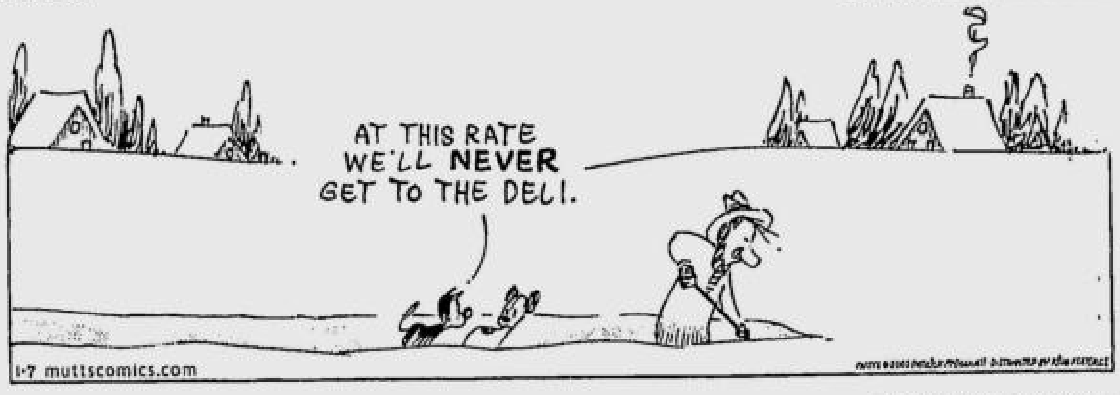
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NADULAS 'YUNG DILA KO KANINA.
ANG GUSTO KONG SABIHIN E, "KAIN NA HONECURED" PERO ANG LUMABAS SA BIBIG KO E, "KAIN NA, HONEY-BUN."
AKALA TULOY NG MISIS KO E MAY NUMBER TWO AKO.
GRABE 'YUNG AWAY NAMIN.
NANGYAYARI NGA 'YAN.
NAG-AWAY NA RIN KAMI NI MISIS NOON DAHIL NADULAS 'YUNG DILA KO.
ANG GUSTO KONG SABIHIN SA KANYA E, "PAKI-ABOT 'YUNG PATIS."
PERO ANG LUMABAS SA BIBIG KO E "PAG NAGBAKASYON ULI ANG NANAY MO DITO E MAMUMUNDOK AKO."

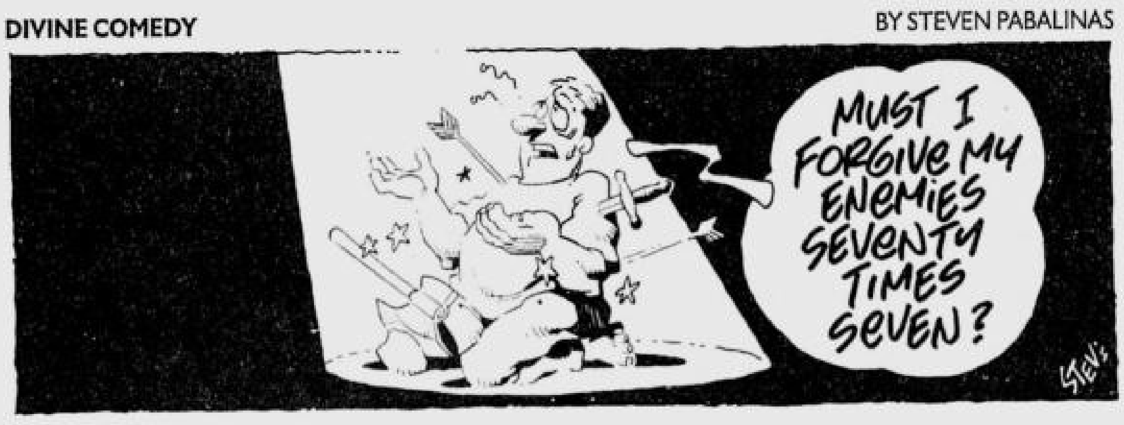
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AT THIS RATE WE'LL NEVER GET TO THE DELI.
1-7 muttscomics.com

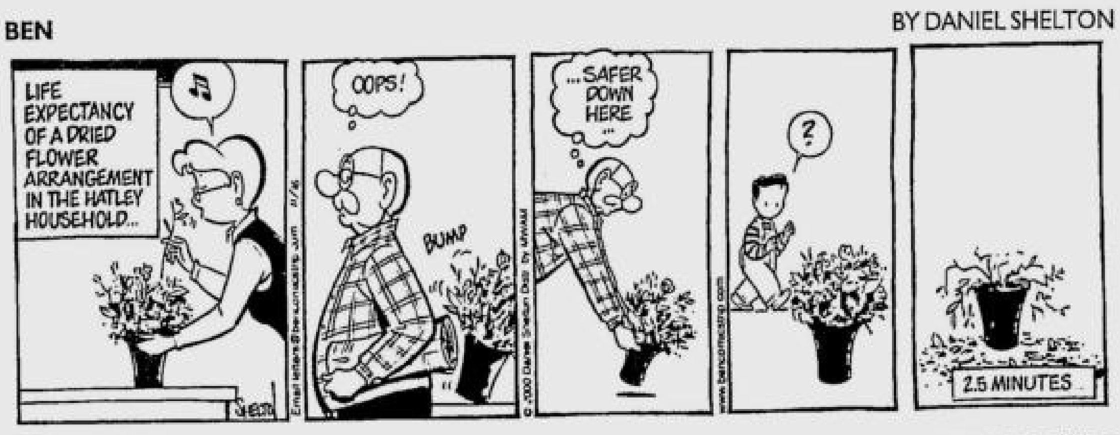
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MUST I FORGIVE MY ENEMIES SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN?
STEVE

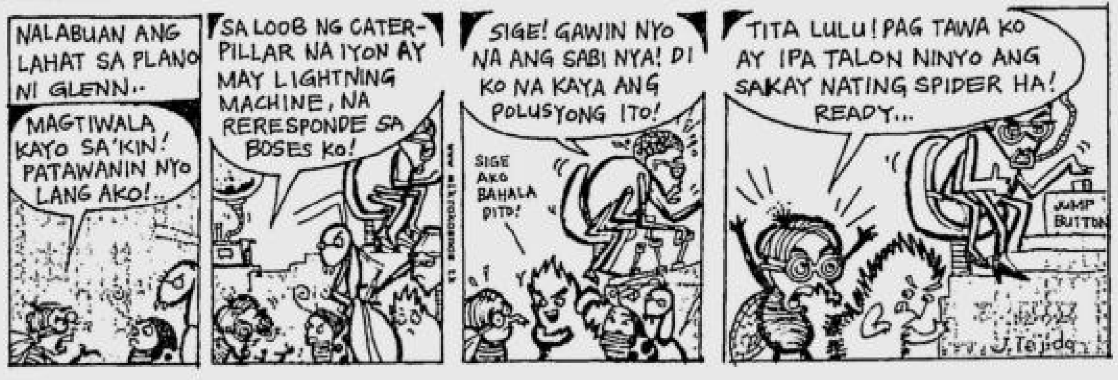
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LIFE EXPECTANCY OF A DRIED FLOWER ARRANGEMENT IN THE HATLEY HOUSEHOLD...
OOPS!
BUMP
...SAFER DOWN HERE ...
?
2.5 MINUTES

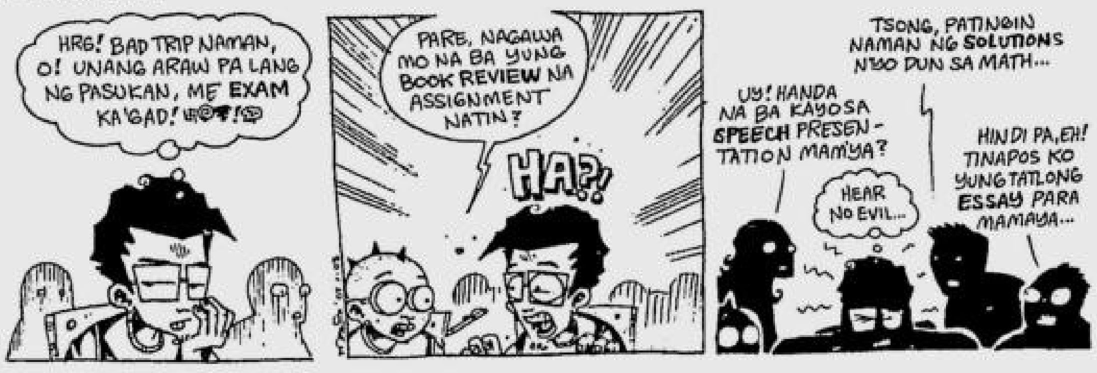
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NALABUAN ANG LAHAT SA PLANO NI GLENN..
MAGTIWALA KAYO SA'KIN! PATAWANIN NYO LANG AKO!..
SA LOOB NG CATERPILLAR NA IYON AY MAY LIGHTNING MACHINE, NA RERESPONDE SA BOSES KO!
SIGE! GAWIN NYO NA ANG SABI NYA! DI KO NA KAYA ANG POLUSYONG ITO!
SIGE AKO BAHALA DITO!
TITA LULU! PAG TAWA KO AY IPA TALON NINYO ANG SAKAY NATING SPIDER HA! READY...
JUMP BUTTON
J. Tejido

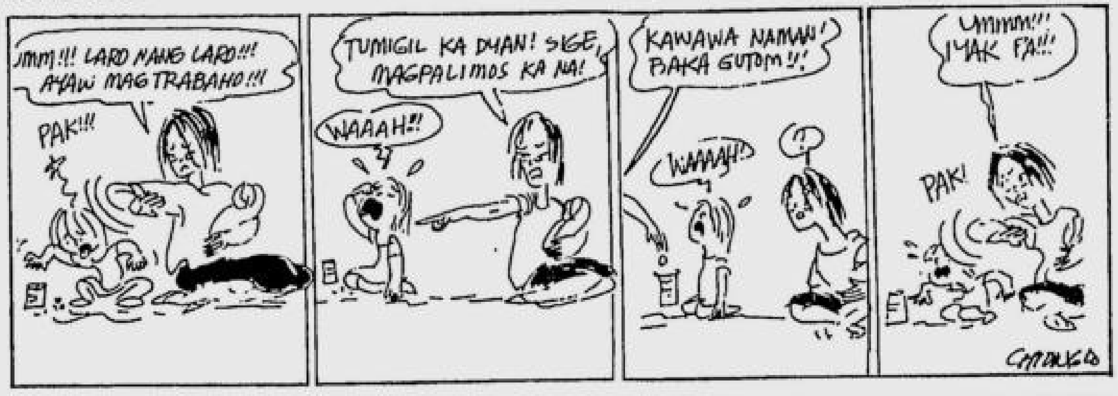
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HRG! BAD TRIP NAMAN, O! UNANG ARAW PA LANG NG PASUKAN, ME EXAM KA'GAD!
PARE, NAGAWA MO NA BA YUNG BOOK REVIEW NA ASSIGNMENT NATIN?
HA?!
TSONG, PATINGIN NAMAN NG SOLUTIONS NYO DUN SA MATH...
UY! HANDA NA BA KAYO SA SPEECH PRESENTATION MAMYA?
HEAR NO EVIL...
HINDI PA, EH! TINAPOS KO YUNG TATLONG ESSAY PARA MAMAYA...

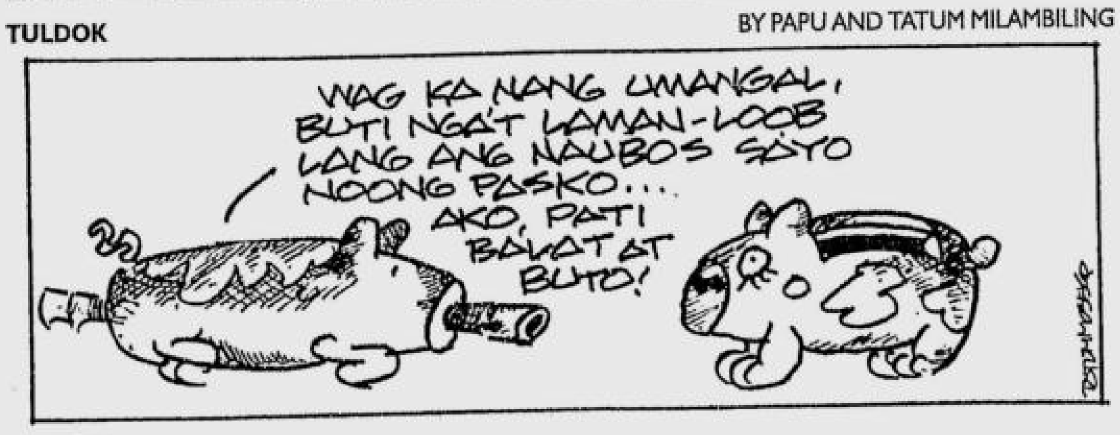
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MMM!!! LARO NANG LARO!!! AYAW MAGTRABAHO!!!
PAK!!!
TUMIGIL KA DYAN! SIGE, MAGPALIMOS KA NA!
WAAAH!!
KAWAWA NAMAN! BAKA GUTOM!!
WAAAH!!
?
UMMM!!! YAK FA!!!
PAK!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WAG KA NANG UMANGAL, BUTI NGA'T LAMAN-LOOB LANG ANG NAUBOS SA'YO NOONG PASKO... AKO, PATI BALAT AT BUTO!

Reader's queries on the Trinity, the Bible and death

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

ONE of INQUIRER Lifestyle's readers, Anna Faith Sajise of Aklan wrote this columnist to ask about reincarnation, the Trinity, Bible and death.

1. Who was the reincarnation of Adam? What makes you think so?

According to American psychic and prophet, Edgar Cayce while in a trance, Adam reincarnated into different personalities namely: Enoch, a man who walked with God according to Genesis; Melchizedeck, a priest at the time of Abraham; Joseph, son of Jacob who was sold into slavery by his brothers; Joshua, the successor of Moses who led the Israelites into the Promised Land; Asaph, a musician in King David's Court; Jeshua, a priest who helped re-establish the worship of God after the Israelites' return from captivity in Babylon; Zend, the father of religious leader, Zoroaster; and Jesus Christ.

As Christ, Adam achieved divinity or complete union with God and will not reincarnate again. He has perfected himself and became the model for all humanity.

2. Do you know of any religion which supports the idea of reincarnation, soul mate and karma and deny the Trinity?

Buddhism and Hinduism both teach karma and reincarnation and perhaps soul mates, too. But I don't know if they deny the concept of the Trinity. This seems to be a specifically Christian concept.

3. Personally do you believe in the Trinity?

According to Catholic religion, this is a mystery. No one can explain it rationally. As a concept, I have no problem with it. For something to manifest in physical reality three aspects of its nature must converge.

4. Is it a sin to doubt the Bible? Also, does it matter if one belongs to one or another religion, since all religions have their own flaws?

Sin for me is just ignorance. I don't think you sin against God if you doubt or don't believe in the Bible. The Bible was written by people like us, with all their human faults, biases and weaknesses. The Bible is also full of inconsistencies and vague statements, that it is difficult to really pinpoint what exactly it is trying to say about certain topics. That's why there are so many interpretations of the passages in the Bible, all claiming to be the correct one.

After having said that, I believe everybody should read the Bible because, despite all its faults, it is still a very inspiring and spiritually uplifting book. It still contains a lot of truth.

For me it does not matter what religion you belong to. They all lead to the same goal.

5. "If man has an immortal soul that separates from the physical body at death, and goes to wherever it is, or is reincarnated, then there would be no need for salvation." (Hebrews 9:27). If we reincarnated several times what happens to God's promises in Rev. 21:4, Psalm 31:29. Matt. 5:5?

The Biblical passage you are referring to above goes like this:

"And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

This passage, like many other passages in the Bible is subject to various interpretations. I do not believe that God judges us after we die. We are the ones who judge ourselves based on our karma or choices made in a previous life. The ultimate divine plan is for man to be one with God. That's the purpose of reincarnation. But you don't have to accept any of this. This is only my opinion, which you have sought.

I have the same answer to your question on what happens to God's promises. It is a matter of interpretation. There will be no end to the debate. All sides can advance persuasive arguments to prove their points.

6. What other book in the Bible was expurgated?

There were many gospels and Biblical texts that were excluded in the official compilation of the present Bible. They were regarded as "of doubtful authenticity." If I'm not mistaken the book of Enoch, Jasher and several others were either edited or completely excluded. I am not a Bible scholar and therefore cannot be more specific than this. However, in 1945 in Nag Hammadi, Upper Egypt, archeologists found a big library containing scrolls or manuscripts of gospels written before, during and after Christ, which were not known before. They include the gospels according to Thomas, Philip, James and even Mary. In 1947, in Qumran Cave near the Dead Sea, two Bedouin goat shepherds stumbled on the Dead Sea scrolls, which spoke about a Teacher of Righteousness who performed miracles.

7. In your opinion, where does our spirit go after physical death?

It goes into a spiritual plane or state which has many levels or dimensions. The spirit goes to that plane or state where he or she is most suited. Immediately after we die, our life just lived will be paraded before us like a movie. It is shown to us very fast from birth to death and sometimes in reverse. We will realize what we did wrong and what we did right. After this self-evaluation of our life just lived, we will make a decision whether we want to go back to earth or incarnate in another body, or stay in the spirit world to learn more spiritual lessons. We can decide to become spirit helpers to those people who suddenly die and get catapulted to the spirit world in a state of shock. In other words, we judge ourselves after evaluating our life.

8. Can you actually see me through remote viewing? Tell me then what you know about me and our place.

No, I don't see you; neither do I want to do this just for the sake of curiosity. If you want to learn remote viewing (or traveling clairvoyance) you may attend either my Inner Mind Development or Basic ESP seminar. I teach this psychic ability in those two seminars. Remote viewing has been scientifically validated after 20 years of research at the Stanford Research Institute, now called SRI International in Menlo Park, California by two physicists, Drs. Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff. It is now being used in military intelligence, crime detection and industrial espionage.

9. Is Mr. Anthony Vivero still healing? Is his service for free? If not, how much?

Mr. Vivero, who began unfolding his psychic and healing abilities after attending my seminars, continues to heal for free every Saturday and Wednesday at his home: No. 22 Essen St., Phase 3, BF Homes, Parañaque. His tel. no. is 820-6850.

9. What are the prices of your books "Magicians of God," "Psychic World and You" and "Beyond Ordinary Reality?" Any plan to revive the Mind, Body and Spirit magazine?

"Magicians of God" is P225 plus P75 postage if mailed. "Psychic World and You" and "Beyond Ordinary Reality" cost P200 each plus P70 postage.

The publisher decided to stop publication of MBS magazine after the third issue because of lack of advertising support. It is difficult to revive the magazine unless we can find a financier who will sustain it for at least one year. Then it can be self sustaining after that.

Note: Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my new website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my DZMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

> 'Despite all its faults, the Bible is a very inspiring and spiritually uplifting book'

Company executive's passion for marathon

WHAT drives a successful company executive to join long distance races? Pure passion and love for marathon.

For Tito Barrameda, the decision to become a runner began 22 years ago when a friend introduced him to the sport. In the summer of 1980, he joined his first race and, being the inexperienced runner that he was, ended up not finishing the race with 2 kms left of the 15 km run.

"The following year, I joined the tryouts in our college varsity track and field team and made it. From then on, I was hooked on the sport—following international track and field news, reading magazines and books on training, keeping a daily training diary and getting the best running gear I could have," said Tito.

Tito recently competed as the Philippine representative to the La Salle Banks-Chicago Marathon. "It was a flat course, which is probably why fast times were easily set by world class athletes and even regular runners like me. I ran a faster time than my previous race in New York," he said.

The La Salle Bank Chicago Marathon, sponsored annually by New Balance International, is a 26.2-mile course lined up with some 900,000 spectators cheering on the runners. The flat, loop course is recognized as the world's fastest course, home to both the men and women's World Records. Some 37,500 runners from around the world participated in the marathon.

Prior to the US marathon, local organizer Planet Sports Inc. held the "New Balance Race to Chicago" as a prelude to the big race. The 25-kilometer run traversed the central business districts of Taguig and Makati.

Barrameda, a supervisor from Ayala Land, has since competed in about 190 running events, and has worn out at least 32 pairs of running shoes.

He said there are three basic things he looks for in choosing the right kind of running shoes: cushioning (to give the runner a comfortable ride during the run); rear foot stability (to stabilize the heel at every foot plant and minimize Achilles injuries); and flexibility (to allow the foot to stretch well during the push off).

During the Chicago Marathon, Barrameda ran on New Balance shoes. "New Balance is a shoe designed for heavy set runners. Lean and thin runners won't be able to feel the cushioning that the shoe generates since the midsole is sturdier than other running shoes that cater to fast and efficient runners.

"I have known New Balance ever since I started running. I learned about it through Runner's World Magazine," he said.

As he preps up for his next marathon, Barrameda shared that the sport toughens up a runner and figuratively transforms a normal person into a "superhuman" as only a few can live up to the challenge.

Founded in 1906, New Balance formerly manufactured arch supports and orthopedic shoes. Since then, New Balance has diversified into making a complete range of athletic shoes for a variety of athletic activities. New Balance is available at the New Balance Concept Shop in Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang and other leading retail outlets and sports shops nationwide.

TITO Barrameda at the La Salle Banks-Chicago Marathon

Disco party marks gym's inauguration

IT was a day full of energy, gorgeous people, thumping sounds and nonstop dancing. Food and drinks overflowed for over 2,000 members and guests who attended the recent inauguration of Gold's Gym located at Rizal Drive, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center.

Mayor Jejomar Binay, senior vice president of Ayala Land Miriam Katigbak, chair of Guess Jeans Michel Stamati, chair of Gold's Gym Philippines Victor Siasat and chair of Gold's Gym Asia Michael Sadak formally opened the gym. Officiating the blessing was Greenbelt parish priest Fr. Leo Doroisla.

The event started with a performance of Pintados at the venue's mall entrance. Before the sumptuous treat, a mini presentation featuring the Gold's Gym Team was staged at the Aerobics Area under the direction of Andy Alvis, who is the resident choreographer of Miss Saigon Asia. MTV VJ Sarah Meier and TV personality Marc Nelson hosted the mini show.

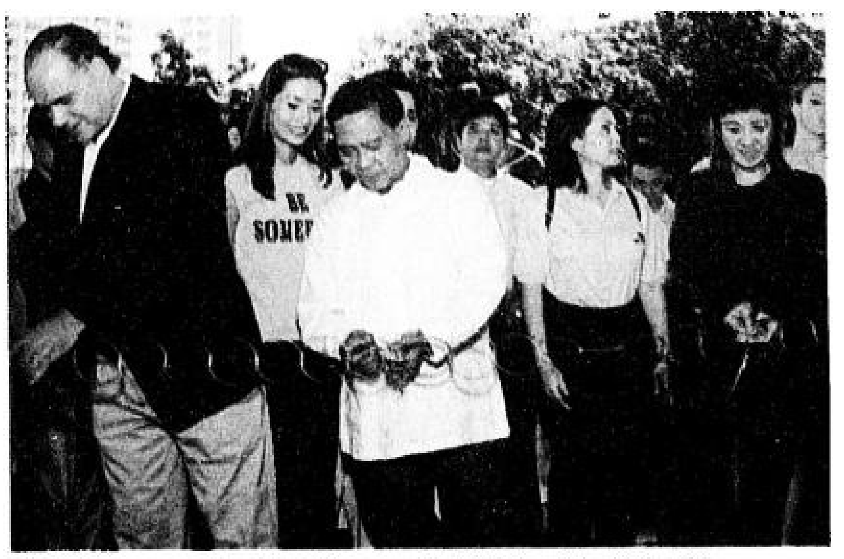
The main event happened in the evening when a party dubbed "Gold Member" was held in the venue.

Seen enjoying the night were Gold members Eric Reyes of Alaska, Troy Franklin, Carl's Jr. president; Anthony Grouched of Guess USA; Adin Gonzalez of Northwest Airlines; Michael Go of KLM; James Benoit and Peter Yeates of HSBC; Peachie Lontoc and Ardie Darwin of Unionbank; and Miguel Ramos and Louie Rogacion of Aspac Advertising.

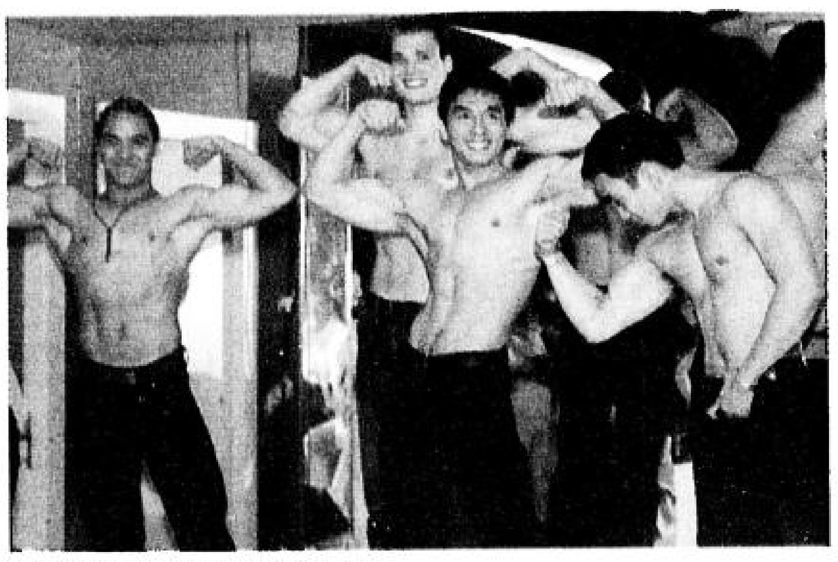
Spotted at Gold's Gym inaugural party were Glorietta mall manager CJ Jesena with Ayala Land's Melo Jalandoni, Tess Palma and Ayala Land Sales top honcho Dave Rafael, APMC's Erick Calupe. Flashing their big smiles in one corner were Toby's chair Bobby Claudio, Unicapital Prexy May Fernandez, Jimmy Martirez, Dong Arguelles, Manolo San Diego, Rod Claudia of SRI/Polar and Prince distributor, Sta. Lucia Realty chair Exequiel Robles and Zaldy Santos and his friends.

It was endless fun at Gold's Gym when more VIP guests mingled with Metro Manila's party people. Making their strong presence felt were Asia Brewery's Jun Alcantara, Citibank's Gig Rodriguez, Tom Valderama and Raven Sokanathan, Buri's Aida Villaluz, Milady's Christine and Mark Dayrit, Hard Rock's Proceso Callison and Body Shot's Zardo Austria who was with the Body Shot celebrities.

Top Filipino entertainers Ivy Violan, Vernie Varga, Kyla, Lani Misalucha, Noel Cababug, Jaya, KC Montero, Whiplash, Manuevers and well-known ramp model Robby Mananquil added pizzazz to the event.

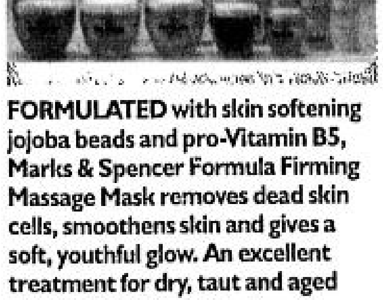


FROM left: Michael Sadak, chairman of Gold's Gym Asia; Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay; and Miriam Katigbak of SVP, Ayala Land

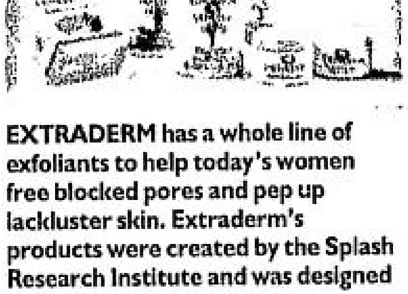


FITNESS enthusiasts at Gold's Gym

Say goodbye to bad skin days



FORMULATED with skin softening jojoba beads and pro-Vitamin B5, Marks & Spencer Formula Firming Massage Mask removes dead skin cells, smoothens skin and gives a soft, youthful glow. An excellent treatment for dry, taut and aged complexions, its moisturizers improve textures, reduce appearance of fine lines and combat dryness. The beauty formula is available in Marks & Spencer Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Glorietta 4 and SM Megamall Bldg. A.



EXTRADERM has a whole line of exfoliants to help today's women free blocked pores and pep up lackluster skin. Extraderm's products were created by the Splash Research Institute and was designed specifically for Filipina skin. Extraderm can also be used to treat drier areas such as elbows, knees, back of the thighs, or other areas that are discolored.

LUSH launches a new and reformulated range of highly effective and original formulations. Each cleanser, toner and moisturizer contains natural ingredients—carefully blended plants, flower absolutes and the finest essential oils. Lush is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. Lush shops are located at Glorietta 4 in Makati, Power Plant Mall in Rockwell and the Shangri-la Plaza Mall.

The aging process can be slowed down by maintaining DNA health

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Rejuvenation begins from within

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

SEEKERS of the fountain of youth know deep in their hearts that it exists. This belief is supported by the adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Gerontologists agree that the focus of geriatric practice is initiating preventive measures which take special cognizance of biological changes and disorders that manifest in the most critical decades of adult life: 45-65.

Anti-aging pioneer Vincent Giampapa, MD F.A.C.S., explains in his book "The Aging Codes Revealed" that the aging process can be slowed down by maintaining DNA health. In the near future, an anti-aging medicine will be able to alter the genes that control bodily processes associated with aging.

Let's Live Magazine, GNC's monthly giveaway, briefly outlines Giampapa's health approach that guarantees a productive life:

- Preserve, restore and keep DNA in optimal condition via supplementation, exercise and diets.
- Inhibit free radicals and keep blood sugar levels steady.
- Consume antioxidants which create an alkaline cellular environment in which cancers and bacteria will not grow.
- Practice anti-stress regimens like yoga and meditation which can calm the mind.
- Complement your health program with nutraceuticals.

Moreover, studies show that worrying can speed up aging. A troubled mind and dependent spirit raises cortisol levels in the body thus speeding up aging.

The science of anti-aging has given rise to nutraceuticals—natural compounds that work in synergy with bodily processes, human growth hormone therapy, the resurgence of traditional herbal medicine and the interest in cell therapy and other approaches. Let's take a closer look at some alternatives:

Nutraceuticals—safe, non-toxic food, animal or plant extracts with scientifically proven health benefits that can create positive physiological changes in the body.

High potency vitamin—mineral cocktails extracted from fruits and vegetables, health-dietary supplements with an age-defying formula that combines a longevity-antioxidant-herbal complex called Revers Age by Reliv (Call 850-9488 and look for Bert Uichangco).

Growth hormone therapy

It is a scientific fact that the production of youth-preserving hormones decreases with age.

Growth hormone injections were widely used in the 1990s. Studies showed that a six-month therapy could reduce the biological markers of aging by 20 years. However, safety and cost issues forced pharmaceutical companies to produce oral alternatives.

Natropin

A safe, science-based nutraceutical growth hormone rejuvenation program consists of an exclusive oral and topical formulation that combines amino acids, peptides and growth hormone releasers. It is accompanied by a skin serum to improve skin elasticity and reduce wrinkles. One can see results like reduced body fat, increased lean mass, energy and stamina, better sleep and sexual energy within 4-12 weeks. Call Margie Lopingco at 867-1097 and 893-1454.

Traditional herbal medicine

Chinese-Indian (Ayurvedic) and Western herbal knowledge propagate the use of some popular herbs like Siberian and Korean ginseng, gotu kola, red clover, garlic, Echinacea, false unicorn root, and black cohosh to improve blood circulation and hormonal balance.

Cell therapy

Based on the treatment discovered by Dr. Paul Niehans, the "Youth Doctor," of La Prairie clinic in Vevey, Switzerland, a protein-free extract from the adrenals, pancreas and heart of an unborn lamb has the ability to improve arterio-capillary irrigation and stimulates the circulatory network. It is effective in cell regeneration and can help prevent heart disease and premature aging. Call Dr. Resty Cornejo at 811-1780.

Aging and hormones

Aging is measured by units of time and is the change in the structure and function of any organism with the passage of time. Scientific research has shown that healthy functioning of the endocrine system can slow down the effects of aging.

Compromised endocrine glands means a decrease in hormone production and release. Poor diet, stress, toxin exposure and lack of exercise can also accelerate aging.

The difference between a child and an older person is that a child has young cells that are replaced rapidly by the body. An older person is older simply because his cells reproduce more slowly. Therefore, the secret to rejuvenation is increasing the rate of cellular reproduction and regeneration processes.

Shuffle walk

To combat exhaustion, over eating, excessive alcohol or drug consumption, here's one way to discharge static, negative electrical charges inside you.

Walk barefoot on the grass for 10 minutes during early evening and if necessary, 30 minutes more before going to bed.

It is possible for people to live into old age with strength and vitality. But, no matter how you look at it, rejuvenation has to begin from inside.

Love and light!

New health facility offers 'fusion care'

TREATMENT options are expanding, searching for new ways, and turning not only towards medical science, but also to the mystical East and her wonders. While the former has been identified as the "standard" in Western treatment, the latter is valued for producing what can only be true wonders for the body. This is called "Fusion Care," and it's now in the Philippines.

Synergy Med Center opened recently to offer the breakthrough medical approach combining the advantages of Western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), in a bid to answer the medical needs of today's people who live in a fast-paced, stress-filled life that is vulnerable to illness.

Occupying the whole 23rd floor of Discovery Suites on ADB Avenue in Ortigas, the center's spacious and well-appointed setting fashions the image of a five-star hotel.

The team behind this endeavor is Fortune Pacific Group, a global player in the medical care business. The group's vision is to bring about improved health and a better quality of life to as many people as possible.

A holistic approach to getting well is the ultimate promise of this center, utilizing the unique ways both traditional and non-conventional methods of promoting and maintaining a person's health and well being.

The facility's Western Treatment Center has consultants from prestigious medical institutions in Manila, who provide patients a comprehensive and thorough examination, ably backed up by state-of-the-art equipment.

On the other side, the Eastern Treatment Center has 10 rooms designed to give patients utmost comfort while a medical team from the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine conducts the appropriate treatment modality. Acupuncture, acupressure and herbal therapy are just some of the services that the center offers.

The patient will receive recommendations from both Western-trained and Chinese doctors on how to improve his/her health and well being, through treatments that will complement the other.

The center has a range of services that crosses both Eastern and Western medical practices. Synergy Med has flexible Executive Plans that can be tailored to suit the patient's needs, while other programmed services address cardiac, liver and diabetes concerns.

Patients are also assured of first-class amenities to make their stay a pleasant one, from the reception area, waiting lounge, down to the therapy rooms—all designed to simulate a relaxed environment for patients.

Call 631-2611/4210/2472.

Seminar on holistic healing

A MODERN spiritual science of the human being, Anthroposophy, if used as a framework in medicine, offers a possibility to heal the inner/outer, material/spiritual divisions in one's personal life.

Anthroposophic medicine is derived from the work of Rudolf Steiner and Dr. Ita Wegman. Anthroposophy's aim is to stimulate the natural healing forces in a patient through a systematic process of inner self discovery, and the use of natural remedies and therapies.

For the first time, the International Anthroposophic Medicine Seminar will be held in Mayridge, Good Shepherd Convent, Tagaytay City on March 14-22.

Call Dr. Divina Hey-Gonzales or Riya Brigino Lopez at (632)928-5386; fax (632)412-3505; e-mail: heydoc@info.com.ph or alibata2k1@edsamail.com.ph.

Take Charge Doc! Rx MEDICard

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

During the orientation of MEDICard benefits for our company, we were informed that dental prophylaxis may be availed only when two quarterly payments have been made. Is this correct?

Yes it is. As a standard policy, the dental benefit Oral Prophylaxis or simply dental cleaning may only be availed after the settlement of at least the semi-annual premium. In which case, if your company pays for membership fees on a quarterly basis, the benefit may be availed only after two-quarter payments. Further, for a company which remits on a monthly mode, prophylaxis may be availed after the sixth monthly payment. This provision does not however affect other dental benefits which may be availed upon effectivity.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Dr. Wilson Q. Gan is MEDICard's accredited specialist based in World Citi Medical Center (WCMC) in Aurora Blvd., Quezon City. Prior to entering the field of Medicine, Dr. Gan took B.S. Biology at the University of Santo Tomas. He then chose to take studies in Medicine at the Far Eastern University and now also specializes in Internal Medicine. Doc Wilson is also the current Medical Director for the AM radio station DWSS 1494 and is also a bible class teacher. For consultations, visit his clinic at Room 207, Mondays to Saturdays, from 7 AM to 6 PM.

Dr. Rizalina Maria Karis M. Mata joined MEDICard in 1999. She finished her degree in Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas and is now frequently referred to as Doc Karis. Now based at Davao Doctors Hospital, she also specializes in Pediatrics and is also a Diplomate of the Philippine Pediatric Society. Members may visit her clinic for consultations at Room 205 of the Davao Doctors Hospital, Mondays to Fridays, from 9 AM to 12 noon and then again from 3 to 5 in the afternoon.

For more than seven years now, Orthodontic specialist **Dr. Cristina Dizon Alinsunurin** has been addressing the dental healthcare needs of MEDICard members. Doc Cristy, as she is known to her patients and colleagues, finished her degree in Dentistry at the University of the East. She took her preceptorship program for her specialization at the Manila Center for Orthodontics and Special Studies. Outside her professional career, she finds time to enjoy her hobbies cooking and propagating ornamental plants. For your dental consultation needs, visit her clinic at 250 Banlic St., Cabuyao, Laguna, Mondays to Saturdays, from 8:30 AM to 7 PM.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 810-1503 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031; For Davao Sales Office call (082) 224-6931/305-3386.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEPICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com.

MEDICard is the first and only HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asian region to be ISO 9002 certified.

ISO 9002

Eat and drink but be healthy

HOLIDAY feasting may have had its short-term rewards, but the fun ceases when the ill effects of overtaxing the digestive system set in. These include stomachaches and gastrointestinal problems like bloating and flatulence, indigestion and heartburn, headaches and irritability.

Healthy Options offers a few simple choices that can give your body a little help.

Mindful eating

The ancient Greek philosopher Plato, as far back as 360 B.C., wrote in The Republic that, "A moderate diet is a healthy diet." That was nearly 2,500 years ago, and he was already advocating moderation, warning that overeating could lead to obesity and disease. Thus his favorite foods included wheat and barley, fish, fruits and veggies.

The trick is to be aware of your choices during mealtimes so you will stop eating when your stomach becomes full. Fresh foods are naturally best for digestion. Fruits and vegetables that have not been heavily processed contain natural fiber, which plays a crucial role in proper digestion and elimination, and is also linked to the prevention of heart disease and colon cancer.

So when dining, choose high-fiber foods (whole-grain breads, fresh fruits) instead of processed products (white dinner rolls, canned cranberry sauce). You may also consider a supplement. Always drink plenty of water.

Consider also that diets that single out one macronutrient as the key to weight loss usually do not work. The way to go is to trim down total calories while still enjoying a variety of healthy foods. Even Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1860 knew that. He said in The Conduct of Life, "Tis a superstition to insist on a special diet."

Soothing herbs

Peppermint is one of the best and most revered remedies, dating back to the time of the ancient Egyptians. Today, pleasant-tasting peppermint tea is often the aperitif of choice to soothe indigestion. Peppermint combined with ginger is recommended for quelling an upset stomach. In hot tea or warm apple juice, it usually yields great results before, during or after a meal.

Try chamomile tea if discomfort persists long after your meal. This is a mild sedative that can alleviate serious stomachaches and cramps. And fennel-raw seeds or tea is a popular and effective remedy for excessive gas.

Traditional Medicinals.
Eater's Digest
Comforting After Meals
Herb Tea

TRADITIONAL Medicinals all-natural and caffeine-free herb tea. Eater's Digest, a refreshing tea beverage with mint, ginger and papaya, aids digestion after meals.

Health Best
All Natural
Almonds Whole
Raw

HEALTH Best all-natural whole and raw almonds. The delicious nuts which are a rich source of magnesium and essential fatty acids are among the power foods available at Healthy Options.

Meanwhile, to increase your beneficial bacteria levels (which live in the intestines and play an important role in digestion by keeping bacteria balanced and in check), include in your menu fresh, active-culture yogurt. This should not be more than a day or two old, or the good bacteria becomes ineffective before reaching the intestines. This is why acidophilus-bifidobacterium supplementation may be a helpful component of your daily diet.